

K. B. E.
M A R I A:

A N O V E L.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

GEORGE BATEMAN.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND,

M.DCC.LXXXV.



VOL. I.

L O N D O N

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL IN THE STRAND.

MDCCLXXXV.

TO THE
HONOURABLE
MRS. WARD.

MADAM,

THOSE who have the happiness of being acquainted with the liberal graces of your mind, and that elegant simplicity of character you have so happily preserved, amidst the glare of unfeeling dissipation and the contagious influence of fashionable affectation, will not wonder that I should have solicited the honour

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ii DEDICATION.

of inscribing with your Name a Work, in which my leading aim has been to pourtray, in the simple but impassioned colouring of nature, the operations of a mind unacquainted with the world—young, artless, sensible, and refined—under the impulse of a lively and insuperable attachment;—and to inculcate the principle of *Active Benevolence*, by displaying its beneficial effects.

They, Madam, who know you best, will instantly feel the propriety of dedicating to you a performance which personifies Goodness in the mild form of female Beauty.

DEDICATION. iii

If the characters and incidents of a sprightlier cast, which diversify these little volumes, should appear to you copied from the Book of Nature, with a hand sufficiently skilful to afford you entertainment, I shall esteem myself happy in the publication:—and have the honour to remain,

M A D A M,

Your most respectful,

obliged, and devoted,

humble Servant,

St. James's Place,
May 10th, 1785.

E. B.

DEDICATION.

If the character and incidents
of a foreigner's life, which draw
the reader into volumes, should ap-
pear to you copied from the Book
of Nature, with a faint similarity
to the actual facts of life, may
I shall esteem myself happy in this
publication—and have the honor
to remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

M. A. A. M.

Your most respectful,

obedient, and devoted,

friend, &c.

Wm. A. A. M.

M A R I A.

CHAPTER I.

DR. Edgeware was a man of genius, taste, and learning; he possessed a soul stable and generous, and a heart alive to the best and even the tenderest impressions of humanity; he had nevertheless an unconquerable shyness in discovering this last amiable attribute, and as carefully concealed the *reality*, as the generality of people aim to display the semblance of sensibility.

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B

His

His virtues were universally respected, and his company solicited, as conferring both honour and improvement: yet, though all gave him the applause of virtue, and the meed of genius, that affectionate regard and attachment, created by the milder graces of the soul, could only be felt for him by his domestic dependants.

His situation in early life was contracted; but his great talents, united with a lucky coincidence of circumstances, had given him independence. He supported himself and a sister (the widow of a clergyman left in indigence) by a handsome annuity, and the sale of his writings.

The Doctor was returning, about the middle of July 17—, from the seat of Sir ———, and on the road to London, the place of his residence; when, passing through the city of —, he had

had the curiosity to inquire after the family of a deceased physician, with whom he had lived in an intercourse of friendship at college.

Though these gentlemen had (for reasons immaterial to the reader) seldom met since the period in which they pursued their studies at the same seminary, yet a reciprocal regard and esteem had ever existed between them.

Dr. Edgeware had been previously informed, that the death of Dr. Mor-daunt had involved his family in calamities of a peculiar nature; and that this distressful event had shortened the life of his amiable partner, who had left behind her a son and a daughter.

He was told, that young Mordaunt was gone to the East Indies ; and that his sister, an elegant girl of nineteen, lived in a family of distinction in the neighbourhood, as governess to a

young lady.—It was with a wish to serve, if in his power, the orphans of this worthy pair, that Dr. Edgeware had made inquiry after their situation.

Having been informed of her residence, he paid Maria Mordaunt a visit.—“I am come, young lady,” said he, with his usual frankness, and softening his voice to the tone of friendship, “to see the daughter of an old collegiate friend; and to know if there is any thing in which I can serve you:—my name is Edgeware; you may have heard your father mention me.”

“You do me a great deal of honour, Sir,” replied Miss Mordaunt, “I have indeed heard my father speak of you with high respect; and have likewise had the pleasure, and I hope I may add, improvement, of reading some of those valuable works with
which

which you have enriched the literary world."

The judicious turn of this little compliment drew the hard features of the Doctor into a still more complacent form; and he replied, "Indeed!—Aye, aye, and do you like reading, child?"—"My books and my music are my chief, almost my only, amusement, Sir," replied she, "in the little time I have to spare from the duties of my employment."—"And pray, young lady, how do you like that employment?" said the Doctor, who had received a very favourable impression of her understanding, from the unaffected turn of her language and behaviour: besides which, there was an air of sadness about her that interested his sensibility. "It is by no means an unpleasant one," returned Maria. "My pupil, Doctor, is sensible and docile,

and I have the happiness of knowing I give satisfaction in my station; but there is a painful motive which impels me to wish a removal, and is at the same time of a nature that precludes my communicating it to my amiable patroness, whose esteem I am so happy as to have obtained. I am perpetually ruminating for an *excuse* to leave her, but can hit upon none that will not subject me to the imputation of ingratitude and caprice in her opinion; and I fear I shall at length be necessitated to tell her the true one."

"Though giving language to irksome ideas, only serves to impress them more strongly on the imagination," said the Doctor, "yet as I have a sincere wish to serve you, if my request is not improper, I should be glad if you would make me acquainted with the cause of your anxiety."

Maria,

Maria, whom his manners had inspired with esteem and veneration, told him, with a frankness that was natural to her, that the cause of her inquietude was a passion which the husband of the lady with whom she lived had conceived for her; and the professions of which gave her continual uneasiness.

The pathetic tone of her voice, the interesting expression of her countenance, wrought sensibly upon the affectionate heart of Doctor Edgeware, but he did not chuse she should see he was so much affected as he in reality was; he drew up his breath, strove to repel a sigh, and to disperse a tear; and after a moment's pause—"I have a female relation who lives with me," said he, "she will be glad of a young companion; and you will, at my house, have an opportunity of more extensively cultivating those talents you have

received from nature ; at least, it will give you a pretext for leaving your present situation : and if you are not happy with us, we will endeavour to promote your farther advancement in life."

Maria received this invitation with every demonstration of gratitude ; the character of the Doctor had been long established, and was well known to her friends, he had been the intimate friend of her father ; she knew no objection to the benevolent proposal he had made her ; for she sought improvement, and she loved instruction ; but above all, it afforded her an eligible opportunity of leaving her present situation, without wounding the feelings of her patroness, or incurring the imputation of ingratitude.

The friends of Maria were happy to commit her to the care of Doctor Edgeware and his sister ; and this invitation

visitation being made known to her patroness, it was agreed that our heroine should leave her, as soon as she should have accommodated herself with a person to fill her place. When the Doctor, taking a friendly leave of his young charge, set forward on his journey, and arrived safe in London.

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C H A P. II.

STORY OF MARIA.

THE father of Maria was a physician of great eminence in one of our most capital provincial cities; a man of considerable learning, nice honour, great talents, and a most prepossessing address. He was a descendant of a younger branch of an ancient and honourable family; but marrying, soon after his return from the university, a woman without fortune, and of obscure birth, his father disinherited, and his relations disowned him; so that he found himself wholly dependant, for the support of his family, on the practice of the art of medicine, which had been his most favourite study.

At

At the period this history commences, Dr. Mordaunt's family consisted of a wife and two children, a son and a daughter, all virtuous and amiable; in addition to these blessings, he saw his fame and fortune increasing daily, and bidding fair to rise to the height of his well-regulated wishes.—His son, a youth of excellent parts, was receiving his education at one of the universities. Our fair heroine was three years younger than her brother, she was just entering into her eighteenth year; her understanding was of the first rate; her disposition soft, delicate, and flexible; her eyes were blue, and beautifully formed; her other features were soft, lively and engaging. Added to these attractions, she possessed the rare gift of a figure that blended dignity with all the sprightly grace and easy negligence which poets ascribe to nymphs

of sylvan race. She had received her education in the house of her parents, who had themselves been her chief instructors in many of the elegant accomplishments she had acquired.

She had, from her earliest youth, associated with the politest families in the city in which she lived, and had spent three months in London, under the guidance of a genteel family, who had been the early friends of her parents; so that her manners were as distant from rusticity, as they were from the frivolous affectation of fashionable refinement.

It happened one day that Dr. Mordaunt was called upon to attend a gentleman who lay sick at one of the principal inns in the city; having been seized with a fever as he was pursuing a journey. The stranger was attended only by his valet, who informed Mr. Mordaunt that his master was the
son

son of Lord Aubrey, and recently returned from Paris, where he had spent several months with his father, who resided there in a public capacity.

Mr. Aubrey appeared about twenty-eight, his person had every claim to the title of manly beauty. The uncommon dignity of his deportment, and the strength of his understanding, which had received every aid from art, joined to the fine polish his manners had acquired from travel, and the air of courts, inspired Dr. Mordaunt with a respectful attachment for so accomplished a being.

The mind of Aubrey seemed to have a cast of melancholy, which Dr. Mordaunt, who could penetrate into the ills of the mind as well as those of the body, soon discovered had brought on the disorder which had introduced him to his acquaintance.

As

As the stranger began to recover, and take the air, Dr. Mordaunt begged he would do him the honour of visiting at his house while he remained in the city of ———: and in one of his morning excursions, Aubrey accepted the invitation.

Our heroine was the only person at home.—She had heard Mr. Aubrey's eulogium repeatedly from her father, but every thing he had said she found exceeded.

His countenance was peculiarly marked with an expression of strong sense, yet displayed a spirit mild, benevolent, and plaintive; a soul that wished happiness to all around, though most wanting comfort and consolation itself.

His ill health inspired her with a tender pity for, and a wish to amuse him; her *forte piano* lay open; he asked her

to touch it, and to sing; she did both, with a readiness that shewed her good-breeding, and a wish of giving pleasure. If Aubrey was charmed with her skill in music, her beauty, and the harmony of her voice, the air of elegant attraction diffused over her person and manners, compleated her conquest.

A poem he had not perused lay on the table, she read two or three passages with an enthusiasm that delighted him. —She requested his opinion, which he gave. The perspicuity of his judgment, and the delicacy of his taste, claimed and won her highest admiration.

Mrs. Mordaunt returned from a visit she had been making, ere he left the house; and, after some little time spent in conversation with that lady, Mr. Aubrey retired.

The moment he had quitted the
room

room Maria's vivacity withdrew itself; she involuntarily reclined her head on the back of the chair on which he had been sitting, and a sensation of pensive regret took possession of her soul. Mrs. Mordaunt, having taken up some needle-work, did not perceive this change in her daughter, but began to expatiate in praise of the stranger; which rousing Maria, she joined with the most animated warmth in the applause bestowed on Aubrey by her mother. A gentleman with whom the family were intimate, and one to whose literary taste Maria had ever paid a particular deference, came in; he took up the book mentioned before, he asked her to read aloud; she evaded it, by saying she had fatigued herself with so doing. He read himself; he commented as he read; but his remarks, though just, no longer interest-

ed her; she left her mother to compliment him upon them, and withdrew to indulge her own reflections.

The mind of Aubrey had, as hath been said before, a deep tincture of melancholy; and it was evident that he sought relief from it in the society of the Mordaunts.

C H A P. III.

IT chanced one day, whilst Aubrey was with them, that there came to spend a school vacation at Dr. Mor-daunt's, a young gentleman who had been committed to the Doctor's care by his parents, who were English settlers in the West Indies.

As they had associated together from their infancy, Maria had for young Robinson the affection of a sister;—when he entered she flew towards him, and giving him her hand, with a lively warmth, that was natural to her—

“My dear Charles,” cried she, “I rejoice to see you.—Come, you must tell me all the adventures you have met with since I saw you.”—

The

The young gentleman kissing her hand led her to a seat, and the moment he had paid his compliments to the company, they entered into a lively dialogue, and by their humorous method of rallying each other afforded great entertainment to Mr. and Mrs. Mordaunt.

But Aubrey, who now for the first time began seriously to find his heart entangled in the mazes of a passion which he dared not to avow or indulge, joined not in the conversation. His features expressed the keenest emotion of spirit; with his teeth fixed together, his hands grasped close, he leant forward, whilst his eyes dwelt with the most piercing anguish on the countenances of both.

Maria, perhaps, perceived something of this agitation, for she rose from her seat, and telling young Robinson he should

should be a judge if she had not improved her skill in music, ran to the *piano forte*, and giving him a book, bid him chuse a song—the book opened at,

“ Say mighty Love, and teach my song,
“ To whom thy sweetest joys belong.”

“ That is an old song,” cried Robinson, “ set to an Italian tune.

Whilst Maria sung the following stanza she perceived on the face of Aubrey indications of the most poignant distress:—

“ Not sordid souls of earthly mold,
“ Who, drawn by kindred charms of gold,
“ To dull embraces move ;
“ So two rich mountains of Peru
“ Might grow to wealthy marriage too,
“ And make a world of love.”

Fearing she had noticed his anxiety, Aubrey withdrew to a window, exclaiming,

claiming, "What a wretched fate is mine!"

This interjection was not heard distinctly by any one present; but his emotion was apparent to all.

That night, whilst the maid was undressing her, the mystery was unravelled to Maria.

"Bless me! Ma'am," said the girl, "what news I have heard to day!"

"What news?" said Maria.

"Why, Ma'am, as I was going across the street to-day, who should come after me, but Mr. Richards, Mr. Aubrey's servant.—So, says he, Mrs. Jenny, I have wanted to see you this day or two; I wanted to invite you to be my partner in a dance which we are going to have.—So I said I was vastly obliged to him, and invited *him* (as I could do no less, you know, Ma'am) to drink tea with me this afternoon;—so, while we
was

was at tea it fell into conversation that we talked about his master, and he told me (I'm sure I never was so astonished) that Mr. Aubrey was married.—Good gracious, Mr. Richards! (said I) why you don't tell me so?—I am sure I am quite disappointed, for I was thinking that there would be a match between our young lady and him.”—

“Surely!” cried Maria, hastily interrupting her, “surely you did not take the liberty of making so impertinent a speech.”

“Oh, dear Ma'am, I am sure I did not mean to give offence—it came in quite natural, and I only said it by way of talking in a pitying way; for Mr. Richards told me a long story of his master's marrying a disagreeable old crab of a woman to oblige his father.”

“Well, what did he say?” cried Maria, impatiently.

“Why,

“ Why, Ma’am, he told me that old Lord Aubrey was a man of great estate, but that his estate was very much encumbered with mortgages; and so, Ma’am, Mr. Richards told me he heard it was always his father’s plan to get his son a great post under government; and then, Ma’am, that he should marry a woman of great fortune, to clear the family estate—and so, Ma’am, the first of these schemes was quite demolished by Lord Aubrey being turned out of the ministry—and then there was nothing to be done but to put t’other in practice.—Well, Ma’am, whilst the family was in Paris (for the old gentleman’s post obliged him to live there) there was an old maid that was sister to some Lord (I forget his name) she had a monstrous great fortune, and used to visit the family, and she fell in love with Mr. Aubrey (as well she might,
for

for to be sure he is extraordinary handsome, and the most of a gentleman I ever saw)—well, Ma'am, and so she fell in love with him; and though she vastly ugly, and old, and disagreeable, the family persuaded him to marry her, for she was in such a bad state of health that they did not expect her to live long.—But Mr. Richards says, he don't think his master ever would have been persuaded, hadn't he been induced by his father's refusing to discharge his debts:—And he told me in *confidence*, that poor Mr. Aubrey, before he married, was dunned and plagued off his life—I believe, by what I hear, when he first went abroad he had a rage for gaming; but since he returned from Italy, Mr. Richards says he never seem'd to have any liking for it.”—

“ You didn't say any more, I hope,” cried she a little tartly, but with a look
which

made Jenny suppose she wished to hear all that *was* said.

“No, Ma’am, I did not say any thing else;—but it was after he had told me this that I happened to say, *I was quite disappointed, for I was in hopes there would have been a match between our young lady and Mr. Aubrey, as he was so great an admirer of her, and so well deserving.* — So says Mr. Richards, Why, as to the matter of that, Mrs. Jenny, it may be more likely to happen now than if they had met before, for the old woman is gone to Bath very ill indeed; and when she kicks the bucket (as the saying is) Mr. Aubrey will be his own master, and may chuse for himself; and I’m sure, for *my* part, I don’t know where he can chuse a more elegant young lady than your’s.——No, says I, that’s what he could not; she’s a most excel-

lent young lady as ever lived.—Yes, I think so, said Mr. Richards, for I really”—

“Pray let me hear no more of the fellow’s impertinence,” said Maria; “I believe you will never finish talking of him.—You did wrong, Jane, to encourage so much prating.”

Notwithstanding the apparent indifference with which Maria had heard this intelligence, she was no sooner alone, than a gush of tears relieved the sorrow which oppressed her heart. She persuaded herself she wept for the sufferings of Aubrey, abstracted from every other consideration; and under the idea of sympathizing pity, indulged the poignant sensations of disappointed love. If (as hath often been observed) “pity melts the soul to love,” when a heart already attached feels its influence, how much more
4 strongly

strongly must it endear the object!
—The information Maria had received, threw a sadness over her manners the next day. As she seemed low-spirited, Doctor Mordaunt proposed their going to the play that evening, there being a tolerable company of players at that time in the city. The comedy of “The Recruiting Officer” was to be performed, by desire of the officers of a regiment then quartered at ———. The Mordaunts went; Aubrey was of their party; the house, as they expected, was extremely full; the abilities of some of the performers decent; and every thing went off pretty smoothly, till the actor who *did* the character of Bullock, either through ignorance of the words of his part, or by way of an attempt at wit, instead of saying, in the fourth act, to Sylvia, “I thought you were a captain, by

your cockade and your courage," exchanged the word *courage* for *impudence*. The gentlemen of the army, incensed at his audacity, which they construed into an insult upon their *profession*, would not suffer the performance to go on, until the fellow had begged pardon on his knees, for his insolence; this he refused to do, standing on the stage with an air of heroism, amidst hisses, groans, &c. till seeing two or three officers attempting to get upon the stage, with their swords drawn, he thought proper to make a precipitate retreat behind the scenes; and the manager, coming forward, told the audience that the performer had made his escape, and assuring them he should not appear any more, unless he made the submission exacted by them. This account of his decampment only incensed them the more;

more; they thought his escape a connivance between the manager and player, and said they would accept of no apology but what came from the latter, and that on his knees, or the company should never be permitted to perform there again. The manager bowed submissively, said he would endeavour to find him, and retired, and the audience again became tolerably quiet; but a considerable time having elapsed, and no one appearing, the house once more became a scene of riot;—several of the officers jumped upon the stage, and ran behind the scenes; but not finding the object of their displeasure there, cut the scenery all to pieces with their swords, kicked the lamps about the stage, &c. &c. The pacific part of the audience strenuously endeavoured to make their escape from this scene of clamour and outrage. Mrs.

Mordaunt and Maria, among the rest, were impatient to get out, expecting every moment to see somebody murdered. Aubrey strove to force a passage for Maria, and in the struggle they lost sight of the Doctor and his lady; and just as they were getting to the threshold of the door, the crowd which hemmed them about gave way for a moment, and somebody accidentally treading on the train of Maria's gown, she sunk down, and the throng closing round her, deprived her of the power of calling for assistance. What were the horrors of Aubrey's soul at that moment!—Terror lent him incredible strength;—by his exertions and his cries he forced back the crowd for a moment, and snatching her (rendered almost totally insensible by the violent concussions she had received) momentarily from the ground, held her in
his

his arms till they got out of the play-house; when lifting her into his chariot, and seating himself beside her, he ordered the coachman to drive to Dr. Mordaunt's. During their little ride, Aubrey, still supporting her, gave a loose to the excruciating motions this alarming accident had inspired. Maria, beginning to recover from the state of stupefaction into which she had been thrown, to a sensibility of his solicitude, heard the involuntary effusions of his grief; which were too anxiously tender, too fondly impassioned, to proceed from any but the lips of love. She listened with a pleasing transport to the heart-soothing sounds, which for some moments banished from her mind all remembrance of his situation, and even suspended, for the time, the operation of pain. But memory, faithful to propriety, soon reminded her of her

fault in indulging these too softening sensations, and recalled her from a seductive dream to a lively sense of bodily anguish. She had received a violent bruise on one side of her head, and a complaint of this was the first words she articulated to Aubrey. Delighted to hear the sound of her voice once again, he expressed his joy in the most animated terms, painting to her the despair in which he had been involved, by beholding her in danger of expiring at his feet. Maria, who had before but a very imperfect idea of what had happened to her, had but just time to thank him for the preservation of her life, ere the carriage stopped at the door of her father's house. Fortunately for our fair heroine perhaps was this interruption;—she might, in the flow of her gratitude, have uttered expressions which would have too faithfully

fully painted to Aubrey the state of her heart. Mr. and Mrs. Mordaunt had happily got home a few minutes before them, unhurt; and the Doctor was setting out again in search of his daughter, for whose safety they were keenly alarmed. Mrs. Mordaunt was greatly affected at sight of the contusion her daughter had received: Maria reclined on a sofa, whilst the Doctor anxiously examined the bruise on her temple, which, to the extreme joy of Aubrey and Mrs. Mordaunt, he did not apprehend would prove of dangerous consequence; he then gave orders for something proper to be applied, and in the interval our fair heroine related, as well as she was able, to her parents the obligations she owed to Mr. Aubrey. Their expressions of gratitude were oppressingly lively to Aubrey, who thought himself amply

repaid for the effort he had made, by preserving from destruction a woman whose life he would have died to have redeemed. As soon as the application had been made to her temple, Mrs. Mordaunt conducted her daughter to her chamber; and Aubrey, after sitting a few minutes with Dr. Mordaunt, took his leave, and returned home much perturbed in mind.

C H A P. IV.

HE was announced at Dr. Mordaunt's the next morning; that gentleman was gone out, and Mrs. Mordaunt engaged: but she told the servant to shew Mr. Aubrey into her dressing-room, where he would find her daughter. Maria had reclined herself on a sofa; and the fatigue of a sleepless night had thrown her into a gentle slumber; her dress was white muslin, and, to shade the light from her face, she had thrown carelessly over it a gauze veil, which heightening the natural delicacy of her features, gave an extreme of softness to her person, that had a most enchanting effect. Aubrey

approached her with the same reverence an ancient Roman would have felt, had he been admitted into the presence of a veiled virgin of the temple of *Vesta*. A small lock of her fine auburn hair had strayed from its confinement, and waved on her shoulder;—the sight of a pair of scissors which happened to lay on a table, tempted him to make himself master of this beautiful treasure: just as he had done so Maria opened her eyes, and detected him in the act of conveying it into his pocket-book. A lovely blush of surprise, of confusion, shot across her cheeks, which her indisposition had before rendered paler than common, whilst, with a hesitating voice, and extending her hand, she exclaimed, “Pray, Mr. Aubrey, return me the lock;—indeed you have done wrong; I cannot consent to your taking it.”—

“Pardon

“Pardon me, dearest Miss Mordaunt,” returned Aubrey; “the liberty I have taken I am sensible needs many apologies; but surely you cannot be so cruel, so extremely rigid, as to deprive me of this little *memento* of the friendship you have professed to honour me with, when I tell you that I must this day bid adieu to your charming society, as I shall leave this city to-morrow, and am now come to take my leave of you and your amiable family, to whose humanity and politeness I owe so many obligations.” The information of his design of leaving the place effected his purpose much sooner than any thing else he could have urged; for Maria’s mind became so wholly engrossed by this idea, that having tremulously uttered the words, “Indeed, Mr. Aubrey! so soon!” she remained silent for some minutes, striving to

conceal the agitation the intelligence had occasioned in her bosom. During this interval Mrs. Mordaunt entered, whom Aubrey likewise made acquainted with his intended journey. She expressed her great regret in very polite terms, and begged he would do the Doctor and herself the honour of spending the day with them. The invitation was accepted by Aubrey ; but, though she had so many opportunities of renewing the subject, Maria never once again alluded to the lock of hair he had taken from her : whether the compassion she felt for the distress which was visible in the countenance of Aubrey the whole day, prevented her from seeking to deprive him of what she apprehended he felt some satisfaction in possessing, or whether she really did not *recollect* the circumstance, we pretend not to determine.

Maria,

Maria, fearful of shewing too plainly her feelings, if she was present when he took his final leave of them, withdrew soon after dinner, under pretence of indisposition, wishing him a safe and pleasant journey, with all the ease she could assume; when, retiring to her own apartment, she gave way to the sad luxury of woe her situation inspired.

C H A P. V.

IT happened, about a year after these occurrences, that a dreadful disorder raged in one of our West India islands, which being taken into consideration by government, it was deemed expedient to send over a certain number of skilful physicians; among whom, the father of our fair heroine obtained an appointment. When he received orders to prepare for his departure, he was advised by his most judicious friends, to convert what possessions and effects he could spare into money to carry with him, with which he was assured he might purchase lands in the Indies,

Indies, that would in time far surpass its present worth in England.

Dr. Mordaunt acceded to these admonitions; and, leaving only sufficient to enable his family to support, during the term of his absence, the situation they had hitherto held in life, he undertook a dangerous voyage, with the hope of benefiting his beloved family.

By the spirited and skilful efforts of the medical gentlemen sent abroad, this epidemic malady was speedily overcome. But alas! at the time Dr. Mordaunt was preparing to return to the bosom of domestic happiness, and anticipating the reward of his toils, an unfortunate accident put a period to his valuable existence, and precipitated his family into the deepest abyss of woe.

Superadded to the irremediable affliction

fiction they sustained in the loss of so wise, indulgent, and affectionate a protector, through the fatal contingency that deprived him of life happening before he had properly secured his newly-purchased lands, all was lost to them.

To attempt a description of the heart-rending sorrows of this afflicted family would be in vain!—The son of this excellent man having just at this period finished his scholastic learning, some of his father's friends procured him an appointment as a writer to the East India Company, and fitted him out for the voyage.

The departure of her son was a very poignant addition to the griefs of Mrs. Mordaunt; and her anguish of mind brought on a disorder, which (in a few months after the death of her husband) terminated in her final dissolution.

Our

Our fair and disconsolate heroine, after her mother's death, received invitations from several of those who had been the particular friends of her parents, to spend her time amongst them till some plan could be thought of for her future establishment. But a lady of fashion in the neighbourhood requesting her to assist in the education of her children, she preferred a regular situation in that capacity to a rambling dependance on the hospitality of friends. Here she might have been as happy as the state of her mind would admit of, had it not been for the circumstance she related on her first interview with Doctor Edgeware, and which the reader is already possessed of.

The mind of Maria had not (at the time the incident occurred which we have recorded in the first chapter of this

this volume) in any degree recovered its usual tone ; the tumult of her griefs had, it is true, considerably abated ; but the painful remembrance of the irreparable losses she had sustained still saddened her soul ; her future prospects were, besides, cheerless and uncomfortable ; of independance she had no prospect, but from marriage : several respectable and advantageous proposals of that nature had been made to her, both before and after the death of her parents ; but the perfections of Aubrey (notwithstanding her earnest endeavours to controul this partiality) had made too deep an impression on her heart, to suffer her to listen with composure to overtures of that kind. She strove unceasingly to banish those perfections from her mind ; but alas ! unavailingly.—She saw nothing elegant, attractive, and commanding, that did
not

not recall to her imagination the same graces, heightened and glowing with redoubled lustre, in the polished exterior, and exalted soul of the too interesting Aubrey.—In this dejection of spirit she arrived in London.

C H A P. VI.

DOCTOR EDGEWARE was on a visit at a friend's habitation a few miles out of town, when Maria arrived at his house in London; but Mrs. Tonto, his sister, received her with many expressions of pleasure.

This lady's figure was long, dry, and uninteresting; her nose narrow and pinched in at the bottom; her lips were remarkably thin, and her eyes in colour, size, and power of expression, pretty much resembled a couple of black cherries.

Her mind had caught a tinge of science from the conversation of her brother, and her deceased husband,
who

who was a clergyman ; but possessing neither strength of understanding, nor brilliant parts, the scattered rays of knowledge she had thus acquired, served only to augment her natural self-sufficiency ; and taught her to look with contempt on persons of better capacity and superior judgment, who had moved in a different circle.

All scandal being barred in the presence of the Doctor, Mrs. Tonto's conversation generally turned on sentimental subjects ; and she would (as Polly Honeycombe expresses it) expatiate for several hours together on "*the sensibility of delicate feeling*;" adorning her remarks sometimes with a few stolen criticisms, that had occasionally dropped from the Doctor in his *tête-à-tête* conversations with her ; but these decorations she usually reserved for days of *Gala*, I mean those periods
when

when she displayed her acquirements at the literary assembly, or *conversazione*, held at her brother's house one day in every week.

And I assure you, reader, Mrs. Tonto had no little portion of celebrity ;—for a small poem, said to have been composed by her, had been handed about in manuscript ; which (having undergone numberless alterations and corrections from the pen of the Doctor, insomuch that scarcely any of the original matter remained) when it was at length turned into the wide world, made no disreputable figure.

This piece had indeed been of singular service to her fame ; for if any dared but to hint that they could discern no symptoms of genius in her *conversation*, they were immediately answered, “ *Oh, she MUST be a woman of talents,*

talents, for I saw a very ingenious poem of her writing."

Beside this, she had had another considerable advantage; namely, the having a very fine compliment upon her wit and beauty sent to her, in a poetical dress, by the ingenious Mr. Niggelpen, and inserted in all the periodical papers. The fact was, she had taken various opportunities of expressing a strong and unaccountable curiosity (people of genius have strange whims) to see in what manner the most celebrated wits and writers of the age formed the letter *A*. Mr. Niggelpen, who had long wished to be ranked among those who had the honour of visiting Dr. Edgeware, and had penetration enough to see into Mrs. Tonto's stratagem, happening to hear of that lady's passion for great *A*'s, immediately sat down and addressed the before-mentioned compli-

D ment

ment to her, which begun, "Ah! lovely black-eyed nymph"—It was wonderfully well received by Mrs. Tonto, and, at her particular request, an invitation was sent to Mr. Nigglepen by the Doctor. The success of Mr. Nigglepen made many more of the inferior wits practise the same trick, but not with the like success; for Dr. Edgeware directly perceived the *finesse*, and told Mrs. Tonto, she must be contented with the high admiration of those gentlemen at a *distance*; for that he could not think of a personal acquaintance with all her multifarious admirers.

How striking an instance of the superiority of modern over ancient modesty does the delicate obliquity of Mrs. Tonto's conduct exhibit, when contrasted with the behaviour of Cicero on a similar occasion? that great orator
writing

writing point blank to request an historian to celebrate him in his work, and even dictating his own eulogium !

Mrs. Tonto was sitting, when Maria came in, surrounded by animals of various kinds : in one corner of the room stood a cage with a pair of turtle doves ; on a cushion by her side lay a dog ; and over her head hung a noisy parrot ; at her feet a large cat, and from the opposite side of the room shrilly warbled a canary bird.

As soon as Mrs. Tonto had paid her compliments to Maria, and informed her that the Doctor was from home, she enquired if she was fond of animals : and, before Maria could reply, told her it was a certain sign of a tender and amiable disposition.

Maria answered, that she had not made observations enough to determine whether it was a *rule*, but said she had

seen several instances of the sagacity and faith of dogs, and knew several very excellent people who were fond of them.

“Oh, my dear Miss Mordaunt,” cried Mrs. Tonto, “I have such a peculiar tenderness for animals of all kinds, you can’t conceive what I undergo through it. I met with an affair last Michaelmas that affected me in a most shocking manner: I happened to call at our poulterer’s in Newport Market, and a boy was going to kill a goose, and he was jerking and squeezing the poor creature in the most excruciating stile your imagination can form an idea of.—I assure you, Miss Mordaunt, the goose sent forth such piteous sighs, and gave such horrid gasps, as the cruel wretch held the knife to his throat, that (as my beloved Sterne says) *they pierced my very heart*;

heart ; and, to increase the anguish of the whole, a parcel of geese that were confined in a great basket, set up such horrid shrieks, as if deploring the fate of their unhappy companion, that I could stand the scene no longer. I put a shilling into the boy's hand, and begged him to desist till I had got out of the market : he did desist, and all was quiet ; but only continued so till I had quitted the shop ; for the moment my back was turned, he again put the knife to the poor being's throat, when immediately every goose in the basket rent the air with its cries. I stopped my ears with my fingers, and walked as hard as I was able out of the market ; and, the Doctor knows, when I got home I was so affected that I fell into an hysterie fit, and, I dare say, shrieked as loud as the poor miserable geese for a couple of hours."

She had hardly ended when a woman servant entered, and began to lay the cloth, but was interrupted by Mrs. Tonto's saying, "Cook, where is Jenny?—you know I don't like to have you come into the parlour;—she knows it is her place to wait at table when John is gone out with his master."

"She is not well, Madam," answered the woman, "and gone to lie down upon the bed. She has got a fever and head-ache, Ma'am."

"I should not have thought of her indolence," said Mrs. Tonto; "that girl is always feigning sickness out of idleness; pray go and tell her to come down;—you know I don't like to have you do any thing in the parlour."

The cook retired, and Jenny came in. The girl was thin, and of a consumptive

sumptive habit ; her eyes appeared heavy and sunken with the head-ache ; her cheeks had a hectic glow, and her lips were parched.

“ What makes you hold down your head and look so ill-tempered ? ” said Mrs. Tonto ; “ you know I cannot bear sulky people about me.”

Maria, who had not yet learnt that difficult lesson (so necessary for a dependant) to see, to hear, and to say nothing, shocked at Mrs. Tonto’s want of humanity, exclaimed, “ Dear Madam, surely you don’t see that the young woman looks ill.”

Mrs. Tonto, after having made so great a parade of tenderness, was not pleased with Maria for this reproof ; which only made her the more obstinately persist in saying, it was all the pretext of indolence.

“ If I thought,” continued she,

“ that she *was* ill, no one would do more for her ; for my part, I am not one of those who think servants a different species ; *I* look upon them as unfortunate *brothers* and *sisters* ; and, when they are *really* ill, treat them accordingly.”

Just before they sat down to dinner, Maria was agreeably surprized by the entrance of Dr. Edgeware, who had returned sooner than was expected ; he gave her, in few words, a very friendly and affectionate reception.

The moment he had seated himself, he called for a glass of wine : as the sick servant brought it to him, he cast his eyes upon her face, and immediately, with a look of compassion and the tone of surprise, articulated the words, “ You are sick ;—why are you here ?” This laconic sentence, contrasted with the long and futile harangue she had so recently

recently heard from Mrs. Tonto, on the subject of sympathy and benevolence, filled her breast with an affectionate veneration for the heart of her patron; and whilst she mentally repeated the words, "You are sick;—why are you here?" a tear of admiration sprung to her eye.

Mrs. Tonto felt the greatest awe in the presence of the Doctor, and the slightest hint from him was a law with her; she accordingly joined in dismissing Jenny, and went to her closet, from whence she disburled something to make a cordial for the sick girl.

C H A P. VII.

THE next morning, as Maria descended the staircase to breakfast, she heard a noise which seemed to proceed from the lower regions; and, stopping a moment to listen, she discovered that Mrs. Tonto differed from other European commanders, whose custom it has been, time immemorial, to inspire their people to action with pleasant and elevating music, she having adopted the mode of the ancient Parthians, who (as Plutarch relates) chose rather, on those occasions, harsh, hollow, dismal sounds, something between the crashing of thunder and the howling of wild beasts.

To speak without metaphor, Miss Mordaunt heard Mrs. Tonto, in a
loud

loud and querulous tone, reprimanding her servants for neglect of orders the antecedent day, and enforcing those of the present hour with great warmth and energy.

Maria, wishing to hear as little as possible of the engagement, hastened into the breakfast parlour, and in a few minutes the Doctor made his appearance. Mrs. Tonto no sooner heard his voice in the parlour, than she ascended, and began to apologize for some *loud talking*, she said, she supposed they must have heard, telling them that the cook had been so impertinent she could *not bear her* : “ And this creature I took,” continued she, “ out of mere compassion, when she was out of place and in great distress ; —she perfectly begged *herself in*, for I did not think she would do for us ; and now after all, she hath turned out

the most *ungrateful* creature in the world. But this is the way I am always rewarded :—I meet with nothing but instances of ingratitude. It is not only from servants that one experiences it ; there's the ingenious Mrs. Hemistich (from whom one might have expected a better *style* of behaviour) hath used me very unfeelingly. Her beautiful lines upon friendship, so consonant to my own feelings, had won my heart, and, as the poet says,

“ Made it all her own.”

I thought to have formed a pure and lively friendship with her ; but I had no sooner been introduced to her, and had visited her a few times, than I perceived she began to slight me ; and once when I called, she was not at home to me, though I had not got many steps from the door before I saw Mrs. —, the celebrated writer, admitted.

mitted. I declare I was ill for a fortnight after; it threw me into a fever that had like to have cost me my life; for the Doctor knows I was confined to my chamber for several weeks."

"If she did not wish the acquaintance," said the Doctor mildly, "it shewed a sincerity of disposition to drop the intercourse at once, rather than to pretend to what she did not feel. As to her lines on friendship,—it betrays a want of discernment, to be surprised that the mind can conceive and represent beauties in character, which it does not exhibit in its own. One might as naturally express amazement, that a painter could conceive and portray graces and proportions directly opposite to his own figure."

"I believe," said Maria, "we generally expect too much from friendship."

"True

“True;” replied the Doctor, “for my own part, I never suffer my imagination, on a first acquaintance, to conceive any one, however outwardly polished and *urbane*, as possessing superior excellence of heart, till I have seen proofs that evince it in their conduct. Till then, I suppose that any appearance of pre-eminent goodness may result from the graces of deportment, or the glow of shining talents. Thus every noble action I, on a nearer view of them, discover, is a source of glad surprize: and familiarity with friends, which to others often brings disappointment and disgust, to me unfolds unexpected claims for admiration and esteem.

The Doctor now put an end to the conversation, by proposing that they should call upon an eminent statuary of his acquaintance.—This proposal was acceded to, and they went.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

WHILST our little party were admiring a beautiful piece of sculpture, in which the artist had delineated the affecting meeting of Pompey and Cornelia, after the battle of Pharsalia, there came in an elderly man of sedate and methodical appearance, accompanied by a lad of about seventeen or eighteen years of age, whom they speedily perceived to be his son.

Mr. Hardwick (for so was this visitor called) enquired with great solemnity if the wax portrait of himself, he had ordered, was finished : it was shewn to him, and received the sanction of his approbation; his son at the same
time

time pronouncing it “ *a prodigious fine thing, and fifty per cent.* better than any likeness that had hitherto been taken of him ;” and felicitating his father upon being handed down to posterity with exactness, among other *geniuses* of his day.

The Doctor lifted up his eyes at the sound of the words “ *Geniuses of his day* ;” and as soon as he saw Mr. Hardwick engaged in earnest conversation with the statuary, enquired of his son, in a low voice, “ who that gentleman was.”

“ Bless me, Sir,” cried young Hardwick, “ don’t you know my father ? why, Sir, he’s one of the greatest *geniuses* in all our business : Sir, he was the original inventor of *le grand pomade* for the hair : Sir, he has found out things that nobody else before ever found out, and has made a great fortune by his discoveries.

discoveries.—We keep the great perfumer's shop in —— street."

The Doctor started back involuntarily at this piece of information, and uttering the interjection, "humph," and, half suppressing a smile, returned to what he had before been viewing.

"I think, Sir," said Mr. Hardwick gravely to the statuary, "I think I should like to have a *dozen* of these portraits of *myself*, for I have promised them to all my particular friends; but I think I shall keep a couple to put in my own dining room, though I don't rightly know where I shall hang them *both*."

"Oh Lord, father! why hang them up of each side the glass," cried the son, "they'll make exceeding pretty *companions*."

"Why yes, Dick," said he, looking thoughtfully, "that's not a bad notion
of

of thine; but I don't think it will be quite clever neither, upon second thoughts; for I don't recollect I ever saw two things of a sort hung up together."

"Oh Lord, father! did you never see two horns full of flowers, nor two lions heads hung up of each side a looking-glass?"

"True, Dick, true;" said Mr. Hardwick, "I believe you have hit the thing—you are right; and, by way of variety, you know, sir (turning to the statuary) suppose we have one in *white* and one in *coloured* wax."

"Very proper, sir," returned the artist.——"That's a fine conceit of your's, father," said Dick, "because then your friends, you know, will see you in all colours.—Hah! hah! he! he!"

"Don't

“Don’t be too forwardly, Dick,” said Mr. Hardwick.—

Here they were interrupted by the entrance of a footman, bearing in his arms something clad in a scarlet cloth cloak trimmed with gold fringe, which they supposed to be a child in long coats; but upon the wrapper being opened, they discovered a lap-dog almost worn out with old age.

“Mrs. Aubrey’s compliments,” said the servant, “and she has sent the dog she talked to you about yesterday, sir; and she begs and intreats, sir, that you will please to take as strong a likeness as possible, as the *dear creature* is given over by the physician, who says it cannot live above a week longer; and she begs you’ll please to contrive, sir, not to let it sit to be modelled any where but in a warm room, wrapt in its cloak; for if it should be exposed to
the

the dampness arising from a large body of clay, she fears it will be taken off before the statue is completed; and my mistress says she cannot exist after its decease, if she has not a strong resemblance of the sweet original to console her for its loss."

The footman, with great difficulty, suppressed an explosion of mirth, whilst he deliver'd the message; and his auditors were in a situation little less inclined to the indulgence of the risible faculty.

The statuary, however, composed his muscles sufficiently to tell him, "that he was particularly engaged *then*; but desired he would carry the dog into the parlour, and he would *attend it* presently."

The whole company now sacrificed freely to the laughter-loving goddess, except Mrs. Tonto, who was hurt that an extravagant fondness for animals should

should be considered in so ridiculous a light.

"I cannot, I own," said she, "see any thing so very diverting in this affair;—it gives *me* a very high idea of the lady's excellence of disposition.—For even the poor beetle that we tread upon, in corporal sufferance, feels a pang as great as when a giant dies. I think there is something very pretty and affecting in having a statue of an animal that one doated upon in its lifetime, to console one after its departure. For my part, if my poor little Pug was to die, I should be most happy to have a statue of it to weep over in my retirement."

"Certainly, madam," said the sculptor, with an ironical gravity, "it would be a charming *luxury*; the idea is truly sublime, and calculated to inspire a sweet and pathetic melancholy."

“As to the lady spoke of, madam,” said Mr. Hardwick, “I cannot say I ever heard any thing of the excellence of her disposition, though I know a good deal of the history of the Aubrey family.”

“Yes,” said Dick, “we ought to know, for we serves the old lady with all her perfumery; and she uses a vast quantity.”

“Don’t interrupt me, Dick,” said old Hardwick, resuming his discourse; “by what I am informed of Mrs. Aubrey, ’tis a pity but she was laid in cold clay till eternity, or had never taken a fancy to any companions but dogs and monkeys—For I am told the fine young gentleman she married in France, though he is reckoned one of the best tempered men in England, has such a dislike to living with the old crabbed cat, that he has taken himself to travel into foreign parts,
and

and is now making the best of his way to the *tower* of Italy."

Maria had heard too much:—she turned from the company to conceal her emotion! and Hardwick entering upon another subject, gave her an opportunity to recover herself. "Well, Sir," said he, turning to the artist, "now, if you please, we'll talk about this monument for my father, that I was speaking to you about the other day."

"If you'll give me leave, Sir, I'll show you some *designs*."

"Oh, Sir, there's no occasion for much of a *design*," replied he; "I would not go to much *expence*; a good large head, such as one sees against the walls in Westminster Abbey, would do extremely well."

"Have you any portrait of the gentleman, from which I could take the resemblance, Sir?"

“ Why yes, Dick, I believe there is a bit of a *profile*, (is not there child ?) which thy aunt Betty cut in paper ? But, dear heart, sir, I believe there is no occasion for it : I’ll tell you exactly what sort of face he had ; and then you can make a bit of a sketch, and Dick and I can judge directly of the likeness. Let me see ; his *nose* was exceedingly like mine ; was it not, Dick ? (you remember your grandfather, child) : then his *eyes*, as far as I can remember, were somewhat like thine, Dick ; however, I know they were grey.”

“ Well, Sir, his mouth and chin ?” said the sculptor, without relaxing a muscle.

“ His mouth and chin !—why let me see ; I think, Dick, there was nothing very particular about *them* ;—such a mouth and chin as you see very often

often, Sir,—I dare say you could easily give a guess at them, Sir.”

“ Lord, Sir, grandfather was the very *moral* of father,”—cried Dick.

The artist was inspired with a lucky thought ; discovering from their conversation that there was a resemblance between the father and the son, he drew a sketch of the face of Mr. Hardwick, and it was immediately pronounced, by both old and young Hardwick, as like the old man as ever were two *pins heads*.

“ Well, Sir,” said Mr. Hardwick, “ I must take another opportunity of calling upon you, to settle finally about this monument ; for I must haste away, having another artist to call upon, before I go home to dinner.—You must know, Sir, I have composed a Treatise upon *Pomatums* ; to which I intend to *perfix* a Dissertation upon the most efficacious

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cacious methods of preserving and beautifying that most lovely ornament of the human head, the hair—till it has attained a perfection greatly surpassing nature."

"A subject well worthy a philosophical discussion," replied the sculptor, whose ironic gravity was invincible; "but so great a *work* will, no doubt, bring upon you much envious criticism."

"Oh yes, Sir, I suppose I shall have the critics striking at my book; but lord, Sir, I shall only laugh at *their* ignorant pretensions; for what the devil should they know about making pomatums."

"True, Sir, most true."—

"But all this while," resumed Hardwick, "I have been running from the subject; I was telling you, Sir, that I am going to call upon another artist, who is *engraving* my head,
which

which I intend to have *perfixed* to my book. You must know, Sir, that this thought struck me as I was going up Piccadilly t'other day, for there I saw in a book-seller's window, the head of an historian, a poet, a philosopher, a divine, a gardener, a lord chief justice, and the cook at the London Tavern; so I thought, if these men (and I am sure some of them are ugly enough) have their heads *perfixed* to *their* books, sure a man that has written a dissertation upon *hair* need not be *ashamed* to *show his head*."

The philosophical perfumer and his son now made a hasty retreat; and our party, much entertained with the characters they had seen, took a polite leave of the statuary, and returned home.

C H A P. IX.

THE three following days they passed at home; which period Maria spent almost wholly tête-a-tête with Mrs. Tonto, except at eating-times, for the Doctor gave himself up to his studies with an application almost unparalleled. The intelligence of the Aubrey family Maria had received at the statuary's, had *revived*, or rather *augmented* a train of associated ideas that considerably heightened the melancholy which usually appeared on her countenance. The Doctor observed it; he thought the company of Mrs. Tonto, which he knew to be fatiguing enough, might contribute to it; and therefore he said, "Staying at home so much, child, seems

to have cast a gloom over your mind ; I am sorry that almost all our acquaintance, to whom it would give you pleasure to be introduced, are in the country.”—“ Indeed,” continued he, “ now I recollect, I saw Lady Melmoth a few days before you arrived ;—I have often met her Ladyship in company, and she hath as often solicited me to visit her. She told me some law business had retarded her going into the country :—she begged I would call upon her before she went out of town. I told her Ladyship, I had a young person whom I should shortly wish to introduce to her, and gave her a little history of your family and situation ;—on which she said, she should be happy to render you any service in her power, and desired me to bring you to her. She is almost the only person I know, to whom that

air of melancholy you wear would be interesting. There is nothing, I am told, conciliates her affection and regard so closely. Sorrow, from which most people retreat, she pursues. She hath been a widow five years; her jointure is large; the company she associates with chiefly consists of persons eminent for their worth and talents, to whom she is a beneficent patroness. She appears to be a woman of bright parts, and a philosophic soul. Her turn of mind hath led her to literary pursuits. She is a warm admirer of the fine arts, and a liberal patroness of their professors."

"Yes," said Mrs. Tonto, "I believe she has known enough of sorrow herself, not to feel for others. She married Sir Robert Melmoth at the express command of her father; and he was of a rough, unfeeling nature—
ill-suited

ill-suited to her Ladyship's tender turn of thinking:—she has lately taken to reside with Miss Hampden, a lady of literature.”

“Miss Hampden,” said the Doctor, “is a woman of talents; and, from the account given of her by Lady Melmoth, hath, I doubt not, an excellent heart. The friendly union of these ladies seems to bid fair for permanency—which is not often the case in connections of this nature. Persons of distinguished abilities ill brook domestic dependence; and the patroness of sanguine ideas, (even though possessed of an enlarged mind) is often disappointed in not finding the object of her admiration in all points answerable to her high-raised expectations. Whilst, on the other hand, the protectress of more *moderate* capacity, feels the glare of talents, whose bril-

liance she cannot enjoy ; and as novelty glides away, envy or indifference insensibly takes place of admiration and wonder !”

“ Yet, I confess,” said Mrs. Tonto, “ I am rather surprized that Lady Melmoth should choose Miss Hampden for her companion. She seems to me to be of an odd temper. I met her once at my dear friend, Mrs. Blackwell’s :—we were a small party of ladies ;—she said very little, and seemed to me to have a great deal of pride ; at least, she has a great deal of that reserve about her, which I think very unbecoming in young ladies in her situation ; who ought always to study a mild, chatty, and ingratiating behaviour. I imputed it to timidity at first, and endeavoured to engage her in conversation ; but every word she uttered seemed to come from her like
water

maria

water dragged out of a well. But I suppose my society was not good enough for her ; for I afterwards was in her company, and my brother being of the party, she engrossed him in a conversation almost the whole afternoon. I think she certainly must have an extremely odd temper, from what I have heard Mrs. Blackwell say of her."

"Odd temper!" reiterated the Doctor, with somewhat more asperity than Maria had ever before heard him speak to his sister, "She has *talents*, and is dependent ; and that is excuse enough for a hundred *peculiarities*, where there is no *vice*."

So saying, he rose from his seat ; and telling ~~Matilda~~ Matilda he would be ready to attend her to Lady Melmoth's in an hour, withdrew to his library.

C H A P. X.

DR. EDGEWARE's name was no sooner announced to Lady Melmoth, than he was admitted. If the character given of her ladyship by the Doctor had prejudiced Maria in her favour, the noble and majestic air of her figure and countenance, joined to the melodious and endearing cadence of her voice, strengthened her prepossession. When they entered, Miss Hampden was reading to her ladyship. This young lady appeared in the spring of life; her form was easy and *symmetrical*; her eyes were piercing; and the upper part of her face had that elevation, which denotes great sense and a haughty grandeur of soul; whilst there was in the turn of her other fea-

tures a soft roundness, that evinced a spirit warm, generous, and sincere.

“ Dr. Edgeware,” said Lady Melmoth, “ I am most happy to see you; this is an honor I have been long soliciting you to confer upon me.” The Doctor bowed to Lady Melmoth’s compliment, and taking Maria by the hand, led her forward.

“ Here is a sensible little girl, the orphan daughter of a worthy collegiate friend of mine, whom I must beg leave to introduce to your ladyship’s notice; any portion of which that you may honour her with, I think, if I have any penetration, she will not forfeit; for I know your ladyship is too intimately acquainted with the philosophy of the human heart to expect to find in it *perfection*; and from what I have heard and seen of her, the child has little

more than the common foibles of humanity."

"No more;" said Lady Melmoth, with vivacity, "if the expression of the eyes be an emanation of the soul! — This is the young lady, I presume, Doctor, you mentioned to me the other day. Give me leave, Miss Mordaunt, to introduce to you Miss *Hampden*, my particular friend."

The young ladies exchanged mutual compliments, and temporary subjects having been exhausted, the conversation accidentally turned on physiognomy, which was a favourite topic of Lady Melmoth's.

"I am of opinion," said her Ladyship, "that a person of observation is seldom deceived in judging of the mind by the countenance, though it generally happens that the most penetrative
in

in this respect suffer by artifice and dissimulations as often as those who have no pretensions to skill in that particular. The cause, I fancy, may be traced to an innate love of flattery; for let us discover, on a first interview, ever so many unprejudicing lines in the countenance, no sooner has the object in question practised upon us the usual arts of insinuation, than we are insensibly lulled into security, and forget (till reminded of them by too fatally suffering) our first sensations of dislike."

"It does not appear to me," said *Miss Hampden*, "that a pre-eminent skill in physiognomy is (as is generally supposed) the constant attendant of a mind deeply acquainted with the operations of the human heart; but a distinct faculty of itself. It is an endowment which, I apprehend, nature seldom bestows

bestows in a large proportion than any other."

"I differ from you, Madam," said the Doctor. "I am inclined to think this faculty is always a *pre-eminent* concomitant of a philosophic mind; but spirits inquisitive and penetrating enough to analyze, with boldness and precision, the heart of man, act from general principles deduced from their own reasonings. Such persons are apt to look upon an attempt to read the heart by the countenance as at best but an ingenious method of trifling; and hence arises their neglect to furnish and strengthen, by study and exercise, this valuable faculty."

"One would hope then," said Lady Melmoth, smiling, "that the gift of reading countenances is possessed in an extraordinary degree, by those persons of brilliant and refined genius, who usually

ally hate the fatigue of minute disquisitions, as a more rapid and more amusive method of attaining the knowledge of mankind than by studying to discriminate the passions."

No more being said on this subject, the Doctor told Lady Melmoth, he hoped the tedious law business, she spoke to him of, was finished to her satisfaction.

"I thank you, Doctor, for your good wishes," returned her ladyship, "it is happily compleated, and we are going into Dorsetshire within a few days; it has been a great penance to me to stay so long in town, for my brother and Lord Newry (a relation of our family) who are on a visit a few miles distant, have promised to spend a few weeks with me at Dunlough Castle. And as to poor Miss Hampden (continued she smiling) having
never

never yet seen Dunlough, she is impatient to enjoy the delightful horrors of Gothic galleries, winding avenues, gaping chimnies, and dreary vaults; and by way of enlivening the scene, she intends to take with her the tragedies of Eschylus, the poems of Ossian, Castle of Otranto, &c. &c. and I dare say will, by the aid of imagination, behold gigantic hands and legs; and hear the voices of other times come whistling in the winds, and see the grey mists rising slowly from the lake, like an aged man supported by a ghost in mid-air, and presently dissolving in a shower of blood.—Are you, Miss Mordaunt,” continued her ladyship, “a lover of this kind of sublimity?”

“I am indeed, Madam,” said Maria; there is not a piece of antiquity of that kind in my native shire I have not explored.”

“Oh;

"Oh, I am glad of it," returned her ladyship; "for then we may perhaps prevail upon you to accompany us thither. I wish we could. I am sure it would greatly add to any pleasure we might receive there, if the Doctor and Mrs. Tonto would be kind enough to spare you to us."

"Lady Melmoth having made this request, both her ladyship and Miss Hampden waited with a look of friendly impatience for her answer. Maria returned the most polite acknowledgments of her ladyship's kindness she could command; and Dr. Edgeware looking extremely well-pleased, undertook to make her apologies to his sister.

"I am rejoiced," said the Doctor, "your ladyship has conceived so favourable an opinion of my young charge; and I am sure Mrs. Tonto will

will be equally sensible of the advantage she will derive from your ladyship's society, and that of your ingenious friend, Miss Hampden. There are but few of her own sex I am acquainted with, whose notice and friendship I would wish her to cultivate, however they might imagine they honoured her by their notice: for it is a truth that cannot be too often inculcated, that on the dispositions of her *female friends*, depends the good or ill-success of a young woman, on her outset in life."

"Most assuredly," replied Lady Melmoth; "there are but few causes, besides avarice or an addiction to gallantry, which can instigate a man of general good reputation, to injure the character or fortunes of a woman. But in intimacies with her own sex, she has a thousand shoals to avoid; she
will

will meet with women, whose situations in life give them infinite respectability in the world's eye, who will, even under the semblance of friendship, exert every effort to the ruin of her fortunes, for the trivial circumstance, perhaps, of being excelled by her in external appearance; whilst the utterance of a lively repartee in their presence, or obtaining the victory over them in an argument, shall sometimes raise their envy to that height, that not being able to rob her of the fame of a brilliant imagination, they shall, by the blackening efforts of low cunning, tear from the unsuspecting victim of their treacherous arts, the meed due to a good heart—the esteem of the worthy.”

Other company being here announced, Dr. Edgeware and Maria having made their visit pretty long, rose to take their leave; and Lady Melmoth

Maria

moth having told ~~Matilda~~ the day she had fixed upon to set out on her journey, they politely bid each other adieu; the former promising to call at Dr. Edgeware's within a day or two.

C H A P. XI.

WHEN they got home Mrs. Tonto was abroad paying visits; the Doctor went to his library, and Maria seated herself in a street parlour. In a few minutes a knocking was heard at the door, and a person enquired for Mrs. Tonto; the servant said she was from home, but was expected in a few minutes; upon which the visitor said she would wait her return, and was accordingly shewn into the parlour where

where Miss Mordaunt was sitting. The person who entered to Maria was a woman of a dark and heavy aspect, with a small pair of eyes that emitted from the corners, for she seldom looked any one full in the face, the sly glances of malignant observation; her dress was parsimonious and formal; and her unpolished and sideling gait, as she made her *entrée*, united to a certain battered air in her whole appearance, gave Maria somewhat the idea of a woman who had made a campaign in the station of corporal's wife and lawndresses to the officers.

This lady was no other than Mrs. Arachne Blackwell (Mrs. Tonto's particular friend). After the usual civilities had passed, the stranger, who was generally barren enough of conversation, sunk into a stupid silence; alternately amusing herself with poring over
a book

a book that lay in the window seat, and looking into the street: whilst ~~Maria~~ *rilda*, who was disgusted by her forbidding aspect from attempting to force a conversation with her, pulled out her work-bag. At length this gloomy *tête-a-tête* was interrupted; Mrs. Blackwell saw her husband (who, it seems, had promised to call upon her at Dr. Edgeware's) leading Mrs. Tonto across the street; and no sooner was the door opened to them, and they had entered the threshold, than Mrs. Blackwell flew out of the parlour, exclaiming, "I thought you would never have come, love!" And rushing between Mrs. Tonto and the footman, ran her sharp chin right against her husband's; when there immediately proceeded from the contact, for several minutes, a sound very much resembling that occasioned by the lapping of

two

two canine animals in a soup-pot. Having made his apologies with great submission to Mrs. Blackwell for his delay in coming to her, he delivered himself a formal compliment to Maria, (whom Mrs. Tonto introduced to him) and then sat down; at the same time taking hold of a hand belonging to a long yellow arm of Mrs. Blackwell's, which he pressed to his lips with great energy and precision. These kind of manœuvres obliged Maria to turn more towards the window, and applying herself more closely to the needle-work she had in her hand.

The inducements of Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell to this shew of fondness, originated, we have good cause to suspect, not from an overflow of affection, but from pride and vanity. Mr. Blackwell thought it a means of raising him a character for uncommon tenderness

ness and benignity of nature ; and his wife imagined it gave her a sort of superiority in the eyes of other women, to be able to make a man of sense look ridiculous. Mr. Blackwell, however, had for some time seen that his conduct had brought upon him the ridicule of his acquaintance, and began to think it would be better to abstain from performing (at least some part of) this *farce*, which had not all the *effect* he wished ; but Mrs. Blackwell, who was too stupid to see the matter in the light he did, insisted upon the exhibition going on as usual ; and he was obliged to comply, in order to prevent tumults. But to return.

“ My dear Mrs. Blackwell,” said Mrs. Tonto, in a whining tone, “ how glad am I to see you. What an age it is since I have had the pleasure of your company. ’Tis a most affecting thought

thought to me, that we, who have but one soul, should be so widely separated in the body. I wish you lived nearer to me. I am never so happy as when I see you and your amiable spouse together. You remind me so much of the manner in which my dear departed Doctor Tonto and I lived together. And indeed we want all the endearing intercourses of friendship, to enable us to endure the rugged path of life, in which we meet with nothing but disappointments.—You remember that family I *took up*?”

“ I heard you mention the circumstance, Madam,” said Mr. Blackwell ; “ ’twas an uncommon instance of benevolence.”

“ Well, Sir, they all turned out ungrateful, and used me in the worst manner you can conceive.”

“ What ! did they all prove un-
 VOL. I. F grateful,

grateful, Madam?" said Maria, with surprise.

"Yes, my dear, *all*; and I believe there were a *dozen* in family."

"What an affecting instance of the depravity of human nature," said Maria. "But disappointments of this kind will never deter a liberal mind from seeking occasions to render services. There is a pleasure of the highest and noblest kind annexed to the performance of a generous action; a pleasure which the gratitude of the objects obliged may somewhat increase, but which their *ingratitude* can never destroy."

aria "Yes, Madam," said Mrs. Blackwell, turning to Mrs. Tonto, without attending to ~~Matilda's~~ observation, "I am continually observing to Mr. Blackwell, one gets nothing but ill-treatment for one's generosity and kindness."

ness. You know how I have been used in one or two instances lately ; however, for my own part, I have always a pleasure, that I cannot describe, both in *thinking* and *talking* of favours I have conferred ;—and 'tis so agreeable of a night to lie awake, and think of all the good things one has done in the day.”

“ A very fine observation, my sweetest Arachne,” cried Mr. Blackwell.

“ Oh yes, Madam,” said Mrs. Ton-
to ; “ the idea of a benevolent action is a divine sensation ; it dissolves the soul in a kind of transport. I don't know how to describe it—but sometimes I've been ready to go into an hysteric fit.”

“ Oh, my dear friend, you quite affect me,” said Mrs. Blackwell ; “ you speak my very soul.”

Here the ladies applied their pocket

F 2 handkerchiefs ;

handkerchiefs; and Mr. Blackwell, with some difficulty, jerked a few tears into his eyes.

“Yes, Madam,” continued Mrs. Blackwell, “you have just described my feelings. I was in such a situation the other day; wasn’t I, love?”

“Yes, my poor Arachne, you made such a noise in your fit, that I expected every minute the neighbours would come in to inquire what was the matter; and I was obliged to throw cold water upon you, till I thought I should have drowned you, my sweetest Arachne.”

“So you did, love,” said she; and after again embracing him, she entered upon a new subject with Mrs. Tonto; suffering Mr. Blackwell to walk towards the window. He asked the opinion of Maria on several subjects, and paid her many high-flown compliments,

pliments, insomuch that Mrs. Blackwell's vanity began to take the alarm, thinking Maria engrossed too much of his attention; and she accordingly called him off, by saying,

"Mrs. Tonto, love, wants to know your opinion of Mrs. Epigram's Poems."

"Oh, mere bombast and fustian, Madam!" said he crossing the room to them.

"You have been in her company, Sir," said Mrs. Tonto.

"I have, Madam."

"Do pray, love, give Mrs. Tonto a description of Mrs. Epigram's *person*."

"Yes surely, my dear," answered he, seating himself at the edge of his chair in an erect position; "Mrs. Epigram is a short squat woman; her face, in the shape of a full moon, looks like a

piece of baker's dough, with little round button features pinched out of it; her eyes are like two bits of painted glass; and her figure is the express image of a couple of quartern loaves placed one upon another."

Here the ladies laughed violently; and Mr. Blackwell, turning to Maria, asked her if she saw the last new comedy.—She told him that the winter theatres had closed before she came to town, and begged he would favour her with the story of it, and his opinion of its merits; upon which Mr. Blackwell was entering into a critical discussion; but was called off a second time, by Mrs. Blackwell's desiring him "to come and give Mrs. Tonto an account of what sort of a man Mrs. Epigram's husband was."

"Mrs. Epigram's husband, Madam," said he, "is a little *outré* fellow,

low, as mis-shapen as the famed Scarron, with a strong aukward modification of his legs and arms; he sometimes utters good things in an agreeable tone of voice, and has a handsome face, so that, if he could always be brought into company in a sort of case made in the shape of a tea canister, he might be endured, as we should then only see his face and hear his voice."

"Very good, Sir, indeed!" said Mrs. Tonto, "a very fine stile of *ridicule* upon my word."

Mrs. Blackwell was giving her husband a new subject for ludicrous animadversion, but the entrance of Dr. Edgware put an end to this kind of conversation, Mr. Blackwell being no ways ambitious of displaying his talent for caricature before that gentleman, contenting himself with the applause he had already received from the ladies.

The Doctor said little after the customary civilities had passed, having a very painful head-ache. Maria, on hearing him complain, rose from the corner of the sofa and begged he would take her seat, telling him she would fetch some drops that would give him almost instant relief; so saying she slipped out of the room and ran up stairs: in two or three minutes she returned, and, with an air of filial attention, poured some of the drops into his hand, desiring him to apply it to his head. Mrs. Blackwell at this instant gave Mrs. Tonto a glance from the corner of her eye, so ænigmatical that we pretend not to decypher it.

“Well my dear,” said Mrs. Tonto to Maria, “how did you like your visit this morning?”

“I am charmed with Lady Melmoth,” said Maria, “she appears to
unite

unite all that is great and amiable in woman."

"Was Miss Hampden with her?— How do you like that young lady?" asked Mrs. Tonto.

"Very much indeed, Madam," returned Maria; "she has great good sense, soft manners, and a very attractive person; and, if one may judge from her countenance, a benevolent heart.— I admire her infinitely."

Here Mrs. Blackwell gave Mrs. Tonto another corner glance (which we doubt not had a vast deal of poignant meaning) accompanied by a most sagacious shrug of the shoulders; which, though it might be purely the effect of the wise observations that struck her mind at that time, had somewhat the appearance of malignity. However that matter was, the look gave Maria a much more unfavourable idea of

Mrs. Blackwell, than of the person it apparently alluded to.

The Doctor being so much indisposed, his guests soon took their leave. Mrs. Tonto attended her beloved friend even to the street door; and as they crossed the passage, Mr. Blackwell said to Mrs. Tonto,

“A very fine young lady you have got with you, Madam.”

“A very great favourite of the Doctor’s too, seemingly,” said his wife.”

“She is the daughter of a Gentleman with whom the Doctor had an intimate acquaintance in the earlier part of his life,” said Mrs. Tonto; “she is a descendant from a younger branch of one of the first families in the kingdom.”

“Indeed she seems a sensible, genteel behaved, humane young creature,”

ture," said Mr. Blackwell, formally."

"I believe she is a young lady of a very sentimental and *pathetic* turn of mind," said Mrs. Tonto; "I hope she will make an agreeable addition to our friendly circle."

"Yes, I hope you will be very happy in her society," said Mrs. Blackwell.—"Oh yes! I don't doubt but she is an extremely good-natured young person; but only for my part (though perhaps I'm wrong) I don't much like officious people; sometimes they are apt to be designing;—I don't mean in regard to this young person—no!—I don't mean any reflection upon anybody!—Only I know you have met with so many ungrateful people, that one can't help wishing a person of your open, unsuspecting, *sentimental* turn of mind, to be more upon your guard;

guard ; because sometimes, you know, the wisest are deceived.—People are sometimes prevailed upon, when they get in years, to leave their substance from their own relations ;—*men*, you know my dear friend, have odd fancies.”

Before Mrs. Tonto had time to make any reply to these *friendly* hints, Mr. Blackwell looked at his watch, and told his wife that he feared they should be late home to dinner ; upon which, after a very tender adieu had passed between the ladies, Mr. Blackwell and his spouse departed.

C H A P. XII.

THE day before that which was fixed upon for their journey to Dunlough, our fair heroine spent with lady Melmoth.

Her ladyship, accompanied by Miss Hampden, called in the morning and took Maria with her to Wedgewood's rooms. Maria, who had never before been there, was charmed with the classical taste, and Attic elegance that pervaded every thing she saw.—Lady Melmoth purchased a beautiful tea-service, ornamented with curious bas-relief figures; and gave orders for a chimney piece for her library. Ma-
ria

ria bought a bust of Pericles as a present for Mrs Tonto, she having repeatedly heard that lady express a most profound veneration for the character of that celebrated ancient; one *trait* in particular was the object of her admiration, namely, that he never went out upon business, or returned without saluting his *Aspasia*; a point in which she said her dear departed Doctor Tonto so much resembled him, that she could never read that passage, in the life of Pericles, without weeping.

As they were leaving the rooms.—

“ I know not,” said Lady Melmoth, turning to Miss Hampden, “ what I shall do :—I ought to call upon poor Mrs. Benson before I go out of town, and if I do so, I must leave some very particular business undone, or we shall not get home to dinner, in any reasonable time.” “ If the visit can be paid

by

by proxy, I beg your ladyship will depute me," said Miss Hampden.

"Your offer is very obliging, my dear," returned her ladyship, "and I will gladly accept it."

"Perhaps Miss Mordaunt will be kind enough to accompany me," said Miss Hampden.

"With a great deal of pleasure, Madam."

"You are very good indeed, ladies;" said Lady Melmoth; "I believe you know the street in Picadilly, Miss Hampden?"

"I once went there with your ladyship."

Lady Melmoth now sent the footman for a hackney coach, to carry her young friends; and speaking to Miss Hampden, aside, for two or three minutes, told her the particulars of her embassy.—They then stepped into the coach, which carried them to the

lodgings of a very worthy woman, who had formerly lived as house-keeper with Lady Melmoth, and was at that time partly supported by her bounty: this woman had, for some few years, been confined to her bed by a disorder, which had deprived her of the use of her limbs.

Miss Hampden had been represented to Maria, by Mrs. Tonto, as proud and gloomy; a remark which had arisen, either from a want of sensibility, or a malignity of disposition, in the observer. Early disappointments had shaded with melancholy, a mind naturally ardent and lively; but there are moments when the mind will dilate itself in spite of every sorrow: in these moments, when participated by spirits congenial to her own, Miss Hampden displayed a fund of native humour and manners, gay almost to infantine

fantine hilarity. It is true, on a first acquaintance, or in company where she feared the attacks of familiarity, or the flights of insolence, she often incircled herself with an air of reserve, which served as a kind of intrenchment against both. But her heart was humane, her conversation untinged with the smallest portion of *unprovoked* satire, and her deportment natural and unassuming, except when detestation, at beholding vice or meanness, kindled into rage the native ardour of her spirit. But, to return:—

Miss Hampden communicated to Mrs. Benson the cause of Lady Melmoth's not calling upon her as usual, before she left town, informing her at the same time, it was that lady's wish to know if there was any thing which would contribute to make her life more comfortable she could procure
for

for her. The acknowledgements of Lady Melmoth's kindness, which fell from the good woman, served to heighten the high prepossession Maria already entertained in favour of her ladyship's character.—The person who usually attended on Mrs. Benson being out of the way, Miss Hampden, bidding her to consider her as an old acquaintance, performed several little offices with the ready sweetness, and commiserating aspect of a ministring spirit, ordained to hover round the bed of sickness; and on her reiterating Lady Melmoth's offers of service, Mrs. Benson replied:—

“ Her ladyship is all goodness, Madam; she leaves me without a wish upon my own account; but I know her delight is in acts of benevolence, and there is a family in this house, whose distress I think would recommend

mend them to her ladyship's notice. It is the widow of a tradesman, whose husband died insolvent some months ago, and her two daughters (who seem to have been well brought up) the one about eighteen, and the other ten; the mother is sick in bed, and seems almost worn out with fretting and anxiety. She is sister to a Mr. Hardwick, whose shop I know her ladyship uses; and as he is a person of considerable property, it is a pity but he could be induced to do something to make his sister's life more comfortable, and put his nieces into some creditable employment, as they seem extraordinarily well disposed young people; Mr. Hardwick is an odd kind of man, but I believe he has not a bad heart;—and I think, if Lady Melmoth would condescend to send Mrs. Jennings* to speak to

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him on the subject, her ladyship's benevolent interference might be of great service to those distressed people ; who, from what I learn from my niece who is acquainted with them, deserve a better fate."

"Lady Melmoth," said Miss Hampden, "is at all times ready to be of service to the afflicted ; and I am sure your good opinion, Mrs. Benson, will be a very favourable recommendation of this unhappy family ; and I will not fail to inform her ladyship of the particulars you have related."

"Pray, Mrs. Benson," said Maria, "is not this Mr. Hardwick a perfumer ?"

"Yes, Madam."

"Oh, then I recollect I once accidentally saw him at the house of a statuary of Dr. Edgeware's acquaintance. He is a very peculiar character—

ter—I remember we were much entertained with the oddity of his conversation and manners.” She then described to Miss Hampden some part of his ludicrous dialogue with the sculptor.

“Heavens!” cried Miss Hampden, “what pity it is, that his ridiculous ideas of taste and philosophy should so wholly ingross his thoughts, and bewilder his brain, as to prevent him from attending to the wants and the sorrows of those entitled to his protection and succour, both by the ties of consanguinity and humanity.”

Having taken their leave of Mrs. Benson, as they were crossing the passage to go down stairs, they were stopped by an incident which interested their compassionate feelings.

At the door of one of the apartments on the same floor, stood a coarse

vulgar looking woman, exclaiming to two young girls, of neat and genteel appearance, whom they saw as the door stood a-jar—

“Fine gentlefolks, indeed!—can’t pay a chandler-shop bill of ten shillings! Fine gentry!—however, if it is not paid immediately, I’ll have ye taken to jail—I’ve sent finer folks than you there—Clean linen and white hands indeed!—I should be ashamed of having such things, if I could not pay my debts, but must live upon other people’s substance.”

“Do but have patience, good woman, for a few days; I shall then receive some money, and you shall immediately be paid,” said the elder girl.

“Patience indeed!” replied the woman, raising her voice;—“humph! so you’ve put me off for this fortnight past; but I’ll not be made such a fool
of

of again, not I.—Any body may be gentlewomen, if they have impudence enough to turn sharpeners, and bilk people of their substance: *I* could be a gentlewoman, if I chose it!—nothing so easy.”

“No, that you could not!” said the little girl, with very pointed expression.

But the elder, whose spirit seemed subdued by affliction and the world, by a *look* intreated her to be silent, and answered the woman.

“You give very ill language, and without the least cause: we have hitherto paid you very punctually, and meant to do so now; but the expences of my mother’s illness have straitened us a good deal lately:—however, in a few days I will assuredly pay you.”—
Having now a glimpse of Miss Hampden and Maria, she continued with
increased

increased agitation,—“This is all I can say at present; if you choose to talk further, I must beg it as a favour that you will come into the room.”

“Yes, yes, I’ll come *in*; and I assure you I shan’t go *out*, ’till I have my money; and therefore I’m determined I’ll come in and board with ye, and eat it out, if I can’t get it any otherwise.”—So saying, she entered the room, and seated herself with a menacing air.

“You insolent woman,” cried the youngest girl, rising from her chair, “how dare you”——

She was interrupted by her sister saying to the woman, with a good deal of spirit,—“I know not that my being indebted to you authorizes your behaving in this manner; and I desire you will quit the place immediately, and

and not disturb my mother, who is sick in bed in the adjoining chamber."

Maria and Miss Hampden felt all the agitation that appeared in the countenances of the young people, whom they concluded to be the same Mrs. Benson had spoken of.

"Alas! how shall we assist them?" said Maria; the tear of pity trembling in her mild eyes.

"Good God!" cried Miss Hampden, "I can bear this no longer!"—and articulating these words, she darted into the room, the fire of indignation shooting from her countenance, and turning to the woman, with an air haughty to excess, took the bill out of her hand, and having looked it over, counted ten shillings out of her purse; and, laying it on the table, said, "Take it, thou reptile, and begone!"

—Maria, during this, advanced towards the young girls, the eldest of whom appeared sinking with confusion, and taking their hands, with the voice of tenderness, begged them to excuse their intrusion.

The woman, having received her money, began to mutter a sort of apology for her behaviour; but Miss Hampden reiterating her former command, she retreated with celerity. When that lady, approaching the objects of her sympathy, her eyes, which had till then been illumined by the spirit of disdain, were now melted by the soft drops of tender pity.

“I intreat ye,” said she, “to pardon my abrupt procedure, which appears indelicate; but my feelings are rapid, and that woman’s audacity enraged me beyond the power of attending to forms.”

The

The eldest of the young women expressed her gratitude with great simplicity and propriety; adding, that she could take nothing amiss from spirits so benevolent and kind. Whilst the younger seizing Miss Hampden's hand, pressed it to her lips, exclaiming with vivacity,—“Oh, Madam, you have the charmingest spirit in the world; you served that horrid creature just as she deserved. I'm sure we are for ever obliged to your goodness.”

When they went away, the little girl attended them down stairs, with whom our ladies left a farther testimony of their benevolent dispositions. As soon as they got home, they informed Lady Melmoth of what they had seen and heard, which affected her ladyship very forcibly; and as she was to go out of town the next day, she sent to Mrs. Benson a sum of money, to enable the

family to discharge their little debts, which she begged her to get her niece to deliver to them in the manner she thought best. But Lady Melmoth's generosity was not of that partial kind which contents itself with the mere distribution of a portion of the gifts of fortune, without the fatigue of exertion to render services: it had, on the contrary, an *elasticity*, (if I may so express myself) which made it a double benefit to society. And she accordingly proposed calling herself upon Hardwick, thinking it might have a greater effect than sending a domestic, which would be more likely to wound the pride of this wealthy cit, than stimulate him to an act of generosity.—Notwithstanding, therefore, she was to begin her journey the next morning early, she took her coach immediately after

after dinner, and was driven into the city.

Lady Melmoth's barely announcing the cause of her visit, had a much stronger effect on the feelings of Hardwick, than the most eloquent oration from the distressed party, or from any person of inferior rank and fashion; the fear of censure from the rich and powerful having, in cases like this, too frequently a far more potent effect, than the most pathetic supplications of the suffering object.—Hardwick acknowledged that he ought to do something for them; and said, that he had intended it; but the variety and number of his avocations had prevented him from attending to them—but gave her ladyship his word, that he would settle an annuity of fifty pounds a year upon his sister for her life, and endeavour to place the elder

daughter about some lady of fashion, as an attendant; and in the mean time would take her into his own house.— Lady Melmoth greatly approved of his determination; and now made an end of her visit, condescendingly telling him, as he attended her to her coach, she would herself do all in her power to assist him, in his intention of providing for his eldest niece.

C H A P. XIII.

IT was not till late in the evening of the second day of their journey, that our little party reached Dunlough Castle, a venerable seat of the Melmoth family. Lady Melmoth immediately dispatched a servant to inform her brother of their arrival; who returned to her ladyship's billet a polite and affectionate answer, informing her that he meant himself the pleasure of breakfasting with her the next morning.

Maria and Miss Hampden slept in the same apartment; for notwithstanding the fondness these ladies had expressed for sombrous horrors, neither of them felt much pleasure in the thought

of passing the night alone in the wide chambers of this Gothic mansion.— They both rose at the same hour the next morning.—Lady Melmoth was not yet stirring; and Miss Hampden sat down to amuse herself with a book. The windows of their chamber looked into the garden, which retained (notwithstanding several parts of it had been recently laid out under the direction of Lady Melmoth) many vestiges of antiquity.

Maria remembered to have seen the preceding evening, a back stair-case which led into that part of the garden. She descended it; and having passed a large green plot, in the centre of which stood a little arbour, composed of rude lattice-work and flowering-shrubs, she struck into a walk of tall yew trees, whose branches blending at top, formed a shade sufficient to ex-

clude the sun at mid-day.—A train of ideas, such as the place might naturally be supposed to inspire, took possession of her soul.

The sad picture of Aubrey's domestic life, drawn by the rough pencil of Hardwick, recurred to her mind; she checked not her tender reflections upon his merits, as she was wont to do; for she now considered him as an hapless wanderer, whose peculiar distress well-warranted her softest sympathy.

“How hard the fate of that amiable being!” cried she, “what pity, that a spirit mild, tender, and refined!—a soul so alive to all the sweets that are found in the circle of domestic friendship, should be constrained to roam to foreign climes, in search of that tranquillity which home-bred disquietude had deprived him of here.—Alas!

Why was it not permitted me once again to behold the possessor of so many enchanting excellencies, ere he quitted, perhaps for ever, his native isle?"—As she uttered these words, clasping her hands with an impassioned air, she lifted up her eyes swimming with tears of hopeless sorrow.—

This last action discovered to her, what she had not perceived before—that she had nearly reached the end of the walk, which was terminated by a marble bust, large as life: the surprise made her start back a few paces—but what were her sensations, when, on re-approaching to examine what the hand of sculpture had placed there, she beheld the features of—Aubrey.

His spectre, shown by the pale reflex of the moon, gliding through her chamber at the dread hour of midnight,

night, would not have had a more terrific effect upon her imagination; she started back appalled;—her frame alternately experienced the extremes of heat and cold—tears of horror gushed to her eyes, and the violent emotions of her heart would inevitably have consigned her to a state of insensibility, had not an impassioned burst of hysterical tears, accompanied by the shrill shrieks of woe, prevented that effect. She clasped, with her shivering arms, this death-like and most awful of all imitations of nature—she pressed with her pallid lips, the heart-chilling resemblance of *those* from whence she had so often heard dispensed the tender accents of persuasive softness, the soul of manly sense, and the vivid graces of Attic wit.—Whilst she yet gazed in an agony of dumb despair on each memory-treasured feature, a form majes-

tic, elegant and noble, drew near (unobserved by her) that side of the pedestal on which she leant.—“Great God! what do I behold!” cried she.

Maria knew it to be the voice of Aubrey, and, in the distraction of her tone, fancied she had beheld the lips of the bust quiver with the articulation of the sounds.—Terrified with the idea, her limbs tottered, and she sunk half lifeless on the ground, one side of her head reclining on the foot of the pedestal—Aubrey darted forward—she turned her dying eyes upon him—they closed for a moment.—He threw himself upon the turf beside her, and raising her lovely head from the marble, pressed it to his breast, his lips tenderly declining on her forehead — “Oh! look upon me once again, lovely Maria!” cried he; “it is thy adoring Aubrey calls; he who
loved

loved from the first moment he beheld thy angelic charms." These emotions of new surprize! of sudden joy! acted as restoratives to her fleeting spirits.

"Explain to me the wonders I see. — They told me you were gone abroad," cried Maria, with the voice of pathetic tenderness, knowing what she said.

"The bust, my sweet angel," returned he, "was placed here by the affectionate desire of my sister, who said, she should feel a melancholy pleasure in having such a *memento* of me, whilst I was performing my proposed tour; which unavoidable accidents have for some weeks retarded, to give me this moment of blissful anguish."

"Is Lady Melmoth your sister?" exclaimed Maria.

"She is," returned Aubrey.

How

“How happy is Lady Melmoth!—how happy are you!” cried Maria, disengaging herself from his arms, and making an effort to rise from the ground.

As her spirits recovered, the painful consciousness of having discovered the secret of her soul *to him*, from whom she would have given worlds to have concealed it, overwhelmed her with the deepest confusion. Aubrey would not increase it by endeavouring to detain her. He assisted her in rising, and with an air of the most diffident respect, led her forward, her limbs trembling every step she took. They had scarcely proceeded a few paces, ere Maria, without looking upon him, drew her hand gently out of his; and just then they saw enter the walk Miss Hampden. The usual compliments and enquiries respecting

respecting the state of their health passed between that lady and Aubrey.

"I am very well, I thank you, Sir," said she; "but *you* look extremely pale, Miss Mordaunt: have you seen any *speetre* in this gloomy place?"

Maria turned still paler at this speech; which was, however, merely accidental.

"Something of that kind, Madam, I believe," said Aubrey, with admirable presence of mind; "for not having seen me since I had the honour of visiting her family in ——shire, surprised at viewing so unexpectedly, in a bust, features she had once known, Miss Mordaunt mistook it for a preternatural appearance, and gave a loud shriek, which brought me from another part of the garden to see what had occasioned it."

Miss

Miss Hampden having no cause to suspect any thing further, smiled at the incident; and the conversation turning upon the antiquity of the castle, Aubrey entertained them with legendary tales respecting it, till they reached the parlour in which breakfast was prepared, and Lady Melmoth waited for them.

C H A P. XIV.

WHEN they entered the breakfast-room, they found with Lady Melmoth the relation, whom the reader may recollect, her Ladyship told Maria was to accompany her brother in his visit to Dunlough.

Lord Newry was a native of the kingdom of Ireland, about the age of five and twenty; his figure was tall and manly; his eyes were dark, and had a fire and wildness bordering upon ferocity; his complexion was florid; his features prominent and masculine; and his profile, of the Grecian turn, gave an insinuating softness to the lower
part

part of his face ; which, united with the apparent openness of his demeanor, rendered his person generally pleasing to the ladies ; though his manners had more of ease than elegance, and his conversation displayed a greater degree of spirit and vivacity than wit or solid understanding.

The introductory forms having passed, Aubrey expressed to Lady Melmoth his pleasure at so unexpected a meeting with Miss Mordaunt, from whose family he had received so many polite attentions ; and, relating the circumstance which first brought him acquainted with the Mordaunts, begged leave to re-introduce Maria, as the daughter of a gentleman, and to whose friendship and physical skill he owed his life."

" Then I am doubly bound to love Miss Mordaunt," said Lady Melmoth,
" from

“from gratitude to her family, and admiration of her merits.”

Maria replied, “that had Mr. Aubrey owed her family a thousand obligations, they would have been repaid by the important service he had rendered her; and then described to them the incident which had happened at the play. Lady Melmoth and Miss Hampden uttered the natural expressions of surprise at the disastrous adventure, and Lord Newry seemed much entertained with the account of the riot.

“Your story, Madam,” said he laughing, “reminds me of the first time I fell in love, which happened when I was about sixteen years of age, and with a *strolling princess*. I chanced to be riding through a small village in the vicinity of Belfast with my governor; for some cause or other we stopped

ped at a little hedge ale-house; on entering the kitchen, I saw a handsome young woman tawdrily dressed, with a parcel of dirty feathers and a coronet on her head, walking backwards and forwards, and waving a white handkerchief in great agitation. Enquiring into the cause (whilst my governor's back was turned) she told me she belonged to a company of strolling players in the village; that the tragedy of *The Mourning Bride* was to be performed that evening, and the exhibition was to begin in about half an hour; and that she was dressed for the part of the *captive queen*; but a *chain* for her hands being absolutely necessary to render her habiliment compleat, the distress in which I found her, arose from her not being able to procure one of a decent and respectable appearance, without paying for it.

“*I used,*”

"I used," said she, in a tragic tone, and weeping bitterly, "to borrow an excellent jack-chain of my landlady, which suited me exactly; but that, alas! cannot now be; for she will be presently compelled to put a goose on the spit, which is bespoke for supper."

"Touched with her affliction (for nothing melts me like beauty in distress) I pressed her to accept of money to purchase a *chain*, which she, after some heroic refusals, complied with. I begged her permission to visit her the following day, which my lovely Zara likewise condescendingly granted. Accordingly scraping together all the money I could, I gave my governor the slip the next day, and flew to my beauteous queen, with whom I spent nine or ten days incog. At the end of that time my stock of cash being drained to the last shilling, and my stock of
love

love somewhat lessened, I was reduced to the alternative of either starving or returning, like the prodigal, to my father's mansion. By my soul I was not long in determining, for I began to be heartily tired of truanting."

"And pray how were you received at home, my Lord?" said Lady Melmoth.

"Why, Madam, my mother received me with open arms, forgetting, in her joy at my return, the *cause* of my *absence*: my father commanded me from his presence, desiring my governor to correct me severely; but before I got out of the room, I overheard his Lordship say, *The dog had a fine promising spirit, and was just such another as he himself was at the same age.* My governor too heard this, and mitigated my punishment accordingly."

Lady Melmoth and Miss Hampden
(tho'

(tho' shocked) could not help being diverted with some part of Lord Newry's story; and Maria, low-spirited as she was, forced a smile into her countenance.

The efforts which Aubrey had made to appear chearful, and hide his chagrin, had exhausted his spirits, and he sat leaning his arm on the window, in a supine and melancholy attitude. Lady Melmoth, who sat next him, spoke twice; and offered him a dish of tea without being heard. At last, her ladyship said, smiling, "Miss Mor-daunt, be kind enough to try what you can do."—Maria handed him the tea, with a trepidation that was greatly heightened by perceiving his eyes fixed on a ring he wore upon his finger, ornamented with a small spray of cypress, woven in hair of the same colour as her own, and which she immediately concluded to be the same he had taken

from her at ——. As Maria pronounced, “Mr. Aubrey!”—he started, and looking in her face a moment, without comprehending the cause of her calling upon him, took hold of one of her hands, with a wildness that witnessed an inattention to every other object. Maria, blushing extremely, withdrew her hand hastily; Lord Newry burst into a laugh; and Lady Melmoth and Miss Hampden smiled.

“I beg your pardon for my inattention, Miss Mordaunt,” said Aubrey, recovering himself.

“You ought indeed to make many apologies,” said Lady Melmoth.

“Oh, not at all,” said Lord Newry; “your ladyship sees my friend Aubrey has always recollection enough to prefer the hand of a beautiful lady to a dish of tea. Faith, Aubrey, ’tis my opinion your thoughts at that moment
were

were worth more than a penny.—I should like extremely to know if you were thinking of an old woman, or a young one.”

“Perhaps of neither, my Lord,” said Aubrey, colouring with vexation at this awkward observation.

“Oh, I’ll lay my life you were thinking of a woman; and by——you are in the right—for there is nothing else that is worth bestowing a thought upon.”

“Bravo! my Lord,” said Aubrey, carelessly; “you are welcome to this opportunity of recommending yourself to the ladies, even though you rally at my expence.”

“Faith, it is nothing,” returned my Lord, “but the truth I speak—for there is not a person in the universe hates flourishes so much as I do.”

Our young Hibernian seemed charm-

ed to extacy in the society of our beautiful trio; repeatedly exclaiming,—“ You have introduced me to the Graces, Aubrey—you have introduced me to the Graces!”—and, lost in admiration, knew not on which to fix, as the object of his particular adoration; never doubting, however, from the easiness of some conquests he had made in his own country, but that either might be brought by his assiduities to listen with complacence to his suit.—Whilst in this uncertainty, he conducted himself with the most submissive and respectful gallantry to all; failing not at the same time, *separately*, to entertain them with protestations of a most violent passion; swearing to each, that she was the only woman who had ever made the least impression on his heart; and not forgetting to interlard his discourse with hints, that
although

although he had never before himself been touched by the tender passion, he had made great havock among the hearts of his own countrywomen.

Lady Melmoth replied to these intimations with that sort of genteel railery, with which women of wit, acquainted with the world, usually return the effusions of common-place gallantry.—Maria, with her usual *naïvete*, told him, she was extremely sorry if he really felt for her what he described, as she could not flatter him with having inspired her with sentiments at all accordant; and hoped he would endeavour to philosophize away his attachment to her, in the speediest manner he could devise.—The coldness and reserve of Miss Hampden's carriage to him, had hitherto caused him to be more distant in his behaviour to her, than to either of the other

ladies. But one morning, after having tired himself with making speeches to no purpose to Maria and Lady Melmoth, who happened to be then walking in the garden, he found Miss Hampden alone, and began his address in a stile more vehement than he had ever before used.

“How happy,” cried he, seating himself beside her, “am I to find the idol of my soul thus alone—how anxiously have I languished for such an opportunity of breathing out my passion, and telling you how I have adored since the first moment I beheld you.—Oh, divine Miss Hampden! you have robbed my soul of rest—I cannot live without you:—and will you, charming creature! suffer me to wander about this wide castle, like a gloomy ghost, as I shall shortly be, if you kill me with your frowns.—Come, be generous,

generous, lovely angel! and confess some little return of affection at least." Saying which, (taking the silence in which astonishment held her, for a tacit permission of his addresses) he seized one of her hands, and pressed it rapturously to his lips.

Had Miss Hampden been Lord Newry's equal in rank, she would probably have thought with Lady Melmoth, that ridicule was a weapon sufficiently severe to repel his attacks:—but her delicacy and pride catching the alarm, she construed his freedom into an insult on her dependant situation.—The book she had been reading fell from her hand; she rose hastily from her seat, and, with a look of contempt, vanished from his presence, (to speak in the sublime stile of Ossian) like a meteor shooting athwart the dun horrors of midnight, leaving Lord

H 3

Newry

Newry in a state of surprize and wonder; from which he had not recovered, when Lady Melmoth's waiting gentlewoman, a pretty pert-faced little girl, came into the room with a large quantity of flowers in her hands, with which she was going to decorate the apartment.

"Come hither, my little heart," said his Lordship, seating her on a sofa beside him; "you are a charming girl!—Pray be so kind as to inform me of what rank that young lady may be, that has just left the room."

"That lady, Sir," replied she, smiling, "is my lady's *bumble* companion."

"Nay, there, my life, I am afraid you make a small mistake; for I am rather inclined to think she is her *proud* one."

"Yes, Sir," returned she, with great glee,

glee, "that's just what I say; for now, tho' she's always civil to me, yet I always think there's something about her that says, I am above you!—Proud minx!—some people are as fit for companions as she; though they are forced to take up with being waiting maids. I have had as good education as she, for aught I know. I'm sure I learnt French and dancing; and I don't see why I have not as good pretensions as she to be a companion."

"Aye, my beautiful divinity, and so you have; and you shall be *my* companion, and *my* goddess; and you shall spend half my fortune.—Come, take a faithful, generous lover; and you'll never have any occasion to complain.—Consider, that I have been dying for you ever since I have been at the Castle."

"Lord! where could your lordship

see me ; I thought I had not been seen by any body but my Lady and the servants since I came down.—Dear me, where could your Lordship see me ?”

“ Oh, in the garden, my heart ; or somewhere or other.”

“ No ; I don’t think it could be there, my Lord ; for I don’t recollect I have been in the garden since we came here ; I’ve been so busy unpacking my Lady’s cloaths, and putting them in order, &c.—but perhaps it might be in crossing the gallery you saw me.”

“ You have just hit the thing, my dear ;—it *was* in crossing the gallery, now I recollect :—you had on a red gown.”

“ Oh, no, my Lord, I’ve got never a *red* gown ; I fancy it must be my *blue* tabby.”

“ Right ! right ! *blue* it was—I’ll take

take my oath it was *blue*;—but no matter whether blue, black, green, or yellow; for I should have loved and adored you just the same, if I had seen you without any gown *at all*.”

“Lord, my Lord! you are such strange *adrupt* gentleman.”

“Come, come, my darling goddess, be *my* companion; for, upon my soul, I cannot live without you.—Come, be generous, and give yourself freely; and then you never need sleep alone in this wide Gothic place.”

“Oh dear! to be sure it is a horrid ugly old place; and do you know, my Lord; I am so frightened of a night, I do nothing but fancy I hear *screeches* and groans, and then I shrink under the cloaths, and my teeth go nick knock, nick knock; and I do so *dither* and shake; for I lie in a great flash room, at the bottom of the long

larum old gallery. I am sure I am ready to die with the thoughts of it."

"So, so—she has given me her address," said Lord Newry internally.

"Aye, my life," continued he, "you must let me protect you.—

"Come, silence gives consent."

"Oh, indeed, but it does not indeed, my Lord.—I am quite shocked at your proposal.—I am sure if you was to come, and I was to see you, I should give a great *screech*, and *inspire* down dead directly."

"Yes, yes, you'd inspire me with all manner of joy and rapture."

Here the sound of approaching feet interrupted further discourse of this kind; and Lord Newry having prevailed upon her to accept a diamond ring he had on his finger, she tripped hastily away; intreating him not to come—for that "if he did, she was sure

sure she should give a great *screech*,
and *inspire* directly."

C H A P. XV.

MISS Hampden, fatigued with a visit they had been making that evening, went to bed immediately on their retiring for the night; but Maria, who had a letter to write to Dr. Edgeware, sat down to her pen, and in reflecting and writing spent near a couple of hours:—having, at length, finished her letter, she was beginning to undress, when the mellifluous notes of the nightingale saluted her ears. The night being extremely hot, and one of

the windows left open, she looked out, and was charmed with the sweet serenity which possessed all nature. The little arbour (heretofore described) that stood opposite the window, seemed so charming a situation to enjoy the delightful breezes which fanned the air, that Maria threw a cloak over her shoulders, and repeating softly from Milton—

“ Sweet bird, that shun’st the noise of folly,

“ Most musical, most melancholy”—

stole gently out of the room to seek the back stair-case.

It happened, however, that instead of opening the door which led to this descent, she opened one that conducted into a long gallery, which communicated with the principal apartments of the Castle. The stillness of the night added a terrific solemnity to the place. The moon-beams, which pierced faintly through the Gothic windows, gave
a sha-

a shadowy view of some old paintings, that were thinly scattered about the walls; and here and there, a wide-yawning chimney, resembling a gloomy cave, presented itself; from one of which, whilst she stood with the door in her hand, Maria saw a lighted torch fall on the ground—the fright deprived her of the power of motion; the door slipped from her hand, and closed upon her; and presently after, something all black, and large as the most masculine human figure, followed the torch with an equal velocity of descent, and lay prostrate, seemingly stunned by the violence of the fall.

Whether the terror Maria felt at this moment originated from her supposing the object in question to be a diabolic appearance, or from her alarm, lest a thief had concealed himself there with an intention of robbing the Castle, we know

know not; but the operation of her fear was so powerful, that she turned with breathless agitation to unclosethe door, but in the confusion of her ideas opened another, that conducted into a long narrow passage; which resembling that which led into her own apartment, caused her not to perceive her error till she had attained the middle of it, when its extraordinary length convinced her of her mistake.—She stood a moment irresolute whether to proceed or retreat, when she heard the sound of feet coming hastily towards her, and in an instant felt somebody clasp her round the waist, and by the expression—“Oh! my lovely angel! were you coming like a kind star to conduct me to the goal of happiness?”—discovered it was Lord Newry who held her.

“Unhand me, my lord,” cried Maria,

ria, "I know not what you mean! I came here with no such intention; I have lost my way, and am trying to regain my apartment."

"Oh! bless my soul," cried our Hibernian, vexed at the mistake he had made, "Oh! bless my soul, Miss Mordaunt, is it you? I am vastly sorry for the accident—give me leave to help you to find your chamber—it would give me the greatest pleasure in life."

"You will oblige me far more, my lord," said Maria, who dreaded the thought of rambling about the castle at that time of night with him, "if you will leave me to pursue my way alone."

"I am distracted, my dearest Miss Mordaunt, that you will not let me accompany and assist you; but I would not intrude myself if you desire
me

me not ; for I declare to you upon my honour, Madam, I am one of the modestest fellows in the universe. Though upon my soul, Madam, I am distressed to let you go running about by yourself."

Thus went he on, inwardly rejoiced however that she would not let him accompany her ; for, as he had no expectation of receiving any favours from her, he was impatient to get to a more complying charmer. And if the reader is not very dull indeed, he will be at no great loss to divine the goal to which his lordship was hastening.

Having broke from his imprisoning arms, Maria pursued her way to the extremity of the avenue ; the attainment of which introduced her to a small gallery she had never seen before ; and here, by the light of the moon, which shone with resplendent lustre through.

through a broken window opposite to the place where she stood, she beheld a man lying beside the wall, all pale, ghastly, and weltering in his blood. Maria shrieked aloud at the sight of this dreadful spectacle, exclaiming, with the deep tone of terror—

“Horror and death obstruct my passage!”

when, turning hastily from the sight of so terrific an object, with an intention of regaining the gallery she had left, an aperture in the floor caught her foot, and brought her hastily on her knees to the ground. Whilst endeavouring to disengage herself, Maria heard a deep groan, and an uneasy movement; her head was turned from the spot where it lay, but she concluded it to proceed from the body.—At that instant of alarm and dismay, Aubrey, who had heard her shriek, and who for some reason or
other

other had not been in bed, came hastily out of one of the adjoining chambers, and appeared before her.

“Miss Mordaunt!” exclaimed he, hastening to assist in disengaging her foot from its painful confinement.

“Oh! Mr. Aubrey,” cried Maria, “what is the meaning of that dreadful spectacle.”

“What spectacle, lovely Miss Mordaunt,” cried Aubrey, who had remarked nothing but the agitation in which he had seen her involved, and the disagreeable situation from which he had relieved her foot, happily unhurt by the accident;—“Surely the gloom of the place hath affected your imagination.”

“See there!” cried Maria, pointing to the lifeless figure, with horror in her countenance.

Aubrey directed his eyes to the spot
she

she marked with her hand, and, turning to her again—

“ May every terror which shall assail your breast, charming Maria ! be as easily removed as this ! ” So saying, he led her nearer to the cause of her affright, which, on approaching the wall, she discovered, to her infinite amazement, had proceeded from the wonder-working effects of an antique portrait of a wounded man.

Maria, relieved from this distress, proceeded to relate the cause of her losing herself, and the fright she had been thrown into in the gallery. Aubrey attempted to rally her out of the idea of what she had seen being any thing more than the illusion of fancy ; and, running hastily into his own apartment to fetch a candle, said, he would conduct her through the place where
she



she had seen these alarming appearances, to her own chamber, in order to convince her of her mistake. As he returned with a candle in one hand, and his sword in the other, he said smiling, "We will have yet another guard, Miss Mordaunt;" and, calling Florio! Florio! pretty loudly, a spaniel jumped up from one corner of the gallery, and came bounding towards its master, on whom it lavished the fondest caresses. Maria now beheld the body from which the alarming groan had issued, and was ready to think with Aubrey, that all she had seen in the great gallery had been merely ideal. Aubrey took her by the hand, and had led her through the passage, when they saw at the bottom of it Lord Newry. "Good heavens!" said Maria, provoked at this encounter, "here

"here is that wild being Lord Newry—I forbad him to follow me, and perhaps he'll imagine that——"

She had not time to finish the sentence; the Irishman ran towards them with a look of surprize and distraction.

"Hell and furies," cried he, "I met the devil crossing the gallery, with a flaming fire-brand in his hand."

So saying, he was rushing past them, but Aubrey caught hold of his arm to stay him.

"Fie, fie, my Lord, will not you draw your sword, and accompany me to search into the mystery of this appearance? which I fear is something more dangerous than a spectre of the imagination."

"Upon my soul, Aubrey," cried Lord Newry, somewhat recollecting his scattered senses, "upon my soul I

am

am inclined to be of your opinion ; I am afraid so too."

"Come along then," said Aubrey ; upon which Lord Newry, drawing his sword, marched after them.

After a strict examination, they found the source of their dread concealed behind a door, in one of the chambers near the gallery, with the torch extinguished on the floor. The supposed goblin no sooner beheld a couple of naked swords pointed at its breast, than it fell prostrate on the floor, crying loudly for mercy, in a voice which Aubrey knew to be that of his own servant.

Aubrey, astonished, commanded him, in an authoritative tone, to confess the meaning of his strange conduct and appearance.

The poor frightened wretch raised himself upon his knees, and begun,

"Oh, Sir! I hope you'll be so good as to overlook this little affair;—I believe the devil bewitched me to go up the chimney."

"I believe so too," cried Lord Newry, "pray go on and tell us how this *little affair*, as you call it, came about."

"I believe, Sir, the devil bewitched me," resumed the man, "but I heard Lady Melmoth's servants saying, they had heard *that* chimney in the gallery, that I attempted to go up, was only a *sham*, for that there was a door in one side of it that led into a *suite* of rooms.—

"I believe *this* is all a *sham*;—you deserve to be hanged, by — do you, you impertinent dog," interrupted Lord Newry.

"Be so good to let the fellow proceed, my Lord;—Go on Frederick," said Aubrey.

"I heard,

“ I heard, Sir,” said the fellow, tremuloufly, “ that this door was supposed to lead into a range of apartments, which were built for the use of the monks, who, in the time of their persecution, used to conceal their treasures there : and they told me Sir Robert Melmoth once offered a reward to any of the servants who had courage enough to go up and see if there really was a door : and so, Sir, I thought, as no one had courage to attempt it before, I might, if I could get once withinside the rooms, make my fortune : accordingly, Sir, I took a torch, as soon as every one was gone to bed, and lighted it, and, by the help of a ladder, had got a good way up the chimney ; but just as I had got a ken of the door (I do think I saw the door) I heard a noise, that set me a trembling so violently that the torch
fell

fell out of my hand, and I followed it, almost stupified with fear." Here the poor delinquent ended his narrative, intreating his master to forgive his folly, and not dismiss him. Aubrey instantly ordered him to beg pardon of Miss Mordaunt and Lord Newry. The fellow was in an attitude extremely proper for the submission, having not yet risen from his knees ; and, having performed it, Aubrey, at the intercession of Lord Newry and Maria (who were now more inclined to laugh than be angry at the affair) said he would pass the matter by, and not expose him to the servants ; but adding, that he must consider the disaster of the night as a strong lesson against avarice.

"It is time, my Lord," continued he, turning to Maria, "we should conduct our fair charge to her apartment. I am distressed to think, Miss Mor-

daunt, how greatly you have been terrified and fatigued."

"Faith, I am quite shocked to think of it," said Lord Newry; "how could it happen that you should lose yourself, Madam?—it was very lucky you met with my friend Aubrey, or you would have been in a terrible situation, after you had refused to let me be your *escorte*."

"Lucky indeed," said Maria; "but had I accepted your Lordship's offer, it would only have been the blind leading the blind."

"Well, my dearest Madam, now you are so happy in a guide you *prefer*, will you permit me humbly to be your candle-bearer? But faith I cannot help laughing to think how fortunate it was that you should meet Aubrey, after you had rejected my offer."—Saying this, he took up the candle, and in
so

so doing contrived, whether by design or accident I cannot exactly say, to put out the light.

“Oh good God!” said Maria, “what shall we do now?”

“Don’t be alarmed, Madam,” said Aubrey; “I know the way; give me your hand.”

“Oh never fear, we’ll take care of you, Madam,” cried Lord Newry, seizing her other hand;—and away they went.

As they passed along the gallery, Lord Newry took advantage of the darkness to squeeze her hand repeatedly, and to press it alternately to his heart and his lips; Maria struggled hard to withdraw it, but found she could not without alarming Aubrey. At length, as they were going through the narrow passage which led to Maria’s chamber, he had the audacity to apply

his lips to her cheek. Maria (who, notwithstanding the natural mildness and softness of her disposition, never wanted spirit on proper occasions) was so much exasperated that she would have given him a severe reprimand, had she not feared to irritate Aubrey; she kept silence therefore, but pushed him indignantly from her, with a force that caused his body to press rather too close against the wainscot. Aubrey, thinking his foot had slipped, bid him take care. This mistake so highly diverted his Lordship that he burst into a violent fit of laughter. They had now, to the great joy of Maria, reached the door of her apartment, when, wishing her peaceful slumbers, they bade her adieu.

C H A P. XVI.

THE opening of her chamber door awakened Miss Hampden, who had slept the whole time of Maria's absence. As our fair heroine approached her, she said,

“ I hope, my dear Miss Mordaunt, you wrapt your cloak close about your throat ; I am afraid the night air should give you cold.”

Maria, thanking her for her friendly anxiety, replied, “ that she had not been out of the castle,” and proceeded, whilst she undressed, to tell her the adventure of the night.

The conversation on this subject held them so long that they had talked them-

selves out of all inclination to sleep. And as the tongue of women (as hath been observed at least *once or twice* before, by MALE authors) is an active member, they soon fell upon different topics.

Among other things, Maria, prompted possibly by the accidental recollection of certain glances recorded in the eleventh chapter of this volume, asked Miss Hampden if she was acquainted with a gentleman and a lady of the name of Blackwell, who visited at Dr. Edgeware's; and being answered in the affirmative, enquired what kind of people she thought they were; to which Miss Hampden replied,

"Not *exactly* what they wish to appear."

"I confess," said Maria, "there appeared to me somewhat ænigmatical about Mr. Blackwell; but the character

ter of his wife, may, I think, plainly enough be discovered at a first interview; for she hath neither wit nor address sufficient to shade the badness of her temper from observation."

"There is nothing peculiar in her character," replied Miss Hampden, "to distinguish her from other malicious women of mean intellects and low breeding."

"But as that of Mr. Blackwell is not so obvious in a short conference," said Maria, "I should be obliged to you if you will give me your opinion of his disposition."

"I will tell you sincerely," returned Miss Hampden, "all I *know* of his mind, manners, and fortunes:—Mr. Blackwell was born and bred in a station rather below mediocrity; but a laudable application to the acquirement of scientific knowledge hath raised him

to a respectable situation. He at present enjoys a small post under government, procured for him by a gentleman who admired his talents, and respected his industry. Mr. Blackwell professes himself a rapturous admirer of the ancients, and his supreme ambition is (one may discover on a close inspection) to pass himself upon the world as an exact cast from the model of Cato the Younger; but his natural temper is at continual variance with his desire of fame in that way; he is too deficient in true greatness of mind to support, in the presence of his *superiors*, the severe dignity of that memorable ancient; and he blends a sort of glavering politeness with his starched attempts at the simplicity of his model, which forms an aukward servility of deportment, highly ridiculous and disgusting to those who are so situated as
to

to view the operations of his mind without disguise; for even on the slightest dissention with any one on whom he apprehends he has conferred an obligation, or whom he estimates his inferior, the mask of self-denying politeness is quickly displaced, by his native austereness and vulgarity. And on these occasions, he gives the humorous spectator a much stronger idea of a player burlesquing the part of Cato the Censor, than of the real manners of his descendant.

It is related of Cato the Younger, that he tinged his most serious discourses with a turn of humour; in this too Mr. Blackwell affects to copy him; but in the place of attic wit and well-aimed satire, substitutes an indiscriminating species of ridicule, generally turning on some natural defect of person, organs, or deportment of the *ab-*

sent. He has some talent at ludicrous descriptions of the characteristic *traits* of those with whom he converses ; but his knowlege of the human heart is scanty in the extreme ; he affects to talk of friendship with enthusiasm, but he has an instability of disposition, and a proneness to judge hastily and harshly, which render him incapable of lasting amity, where his pusillanimity has nothing to dread from the displeasure of the object.

His criticisms on books and the fine arts display considerable taste, and some reading ; but he often introduces them awkwardly and pedantically, in company where they can neither be relished nor understood.

“ You have placed his portrait strongly before me,” said Miss Mordaunt.

“ I assure you I have not exaggerated

rated the lines," returned Miss Hampden; "neither have I, I confess, softened them. I have endeavoured to give a true likeness; and this, I think, is but doing justice to myself; as it will enable you to judge how far those dark hints, which I understand they are continually throwing out against me, are to be attended to; and which *you*, amongst others, have, I doubt not, heard, by your inquiries of me concerning these people."

"I profess, my dear Miss Hampden," said Maria, "I never *heard* either of them *utter* any thing to your prejudice; though I cannot say I have never seen Mrs. Blackwell *look* dispraisingly; but the malice which appeared in those glances intirely destroyed their effect."

"Short as my life hath been," said Miss Hampden, "I have seen enough

of the world ; and felt too many of its bitterest disappointments, not to know the absolute impossibility of escaping the envenomed shafts of malice, if we are destined to mix with mankind at large ; more especially if we suffer under the tyrant hand of adversity. Yet, though I have overcome some part of that extreme anxiety to maintain the good opinion of all, which persons of well-turned and ingenuous minds feel on their first entrance into life, I am anxious to explain every thing that may appear dubious to a spirit so upright, amiable, and kind as yours."

Maria, with the utmost earnestness, assured her that explanations were unnecessary ; as she had never felt more esteem or affection for any one, than her excellent conduct and just sentiments, on all occasions, had created in her breast.

" I thank

"I thank you, my dear Miss Mor-daunt, for these friendly assurances; and to convince you of the sincerity of *my* attachment and confidence, as well as to explain some peculiarities you may have observed in my manners, I would give you the particulars of my little history, was I not fearful of saddening your mind, by relating a narrative, the latter part of which you will find marked by peculiar misfortunes."

"Your conduct needs no explanation," said Maria; "but if you should give me such a proof of your confidence, assure yourself that the tears of a sympathising friend, will accompany the recital of your every sorrow."

"I will rely," said Miss Hampden, "on the goodness of your heart, to excuse the prolixity I am apprehensive
I shall

I shall be drawn into. By the latter part of my relation, however, you will discover some *traits* of the Blackwells, which will corroborate what I have before described."

Having thus said, she began as will be related in the next chapter.

C H A P. XVII.

STORY of Miss HAMPDEN.

MY father was born in the middle rank of life; he possessed an employment under government, which afforded him an income of about two hundred *per annum*, when he married my mother, who died in giving birth to myself, her first child.

Just at the period I had attained my seventh year, Mr. G—, a gentleman of a large estate in Wales, with his lady, came from their seat in that country, where they usually dwelt all the year, to spend a few months in town, about a chancery suit which was then depending.

The

The house my father occupied being large, and his family only consisting of myself and one servant, he, at the request of a friend of theirs, accommodated Mr. and Mrs. G— with apartments for themselves and servants, whilst they staid in town.

Mrs. G— having for several years, as I observed before, resided wholly in the country, had few intimate acquaintance in London, and for this reason used frequently to send for me to amuse some of her vacant hours; my infantine sprightliness, joined to that pity and fondness a tender heart feels for a child, (especially of the softer sex) deprived of the maternal care and protection, won so much upon her affections, that when she was to return to Wales, she requested my father would permit her, as she had no child of her own, to take upon her the care of my education.

As

As my father's mind was not of the domestic cast, he eagerly embraced an offer, that so satisfactorily took from him the care of a daughter's education.

Mr. G— had a heart replete with all the gentle and domestic virtues ; he was besides a man of sense, an excellent classical scholar, and a lover of the fine arts.

As I early discovered an aptitude for learning, he took pleasure in being my preceptor ; and instructed me himself in the Latin, French, and Italian languages. Mrs. G—'s woman taught me all kinds of needle-work ; and for the other accomplishments necessary for my sex, I had the best masters the country afforded.—Thus blessed in my indulgent protectors, I lived 'till the age of seventeen ; when Mr. G— was seized with an illness, that in a few months put a period to his valuable existence.

My

My passions were naturally strong, and this was the first real grief I had ever known ; for some hours after the dissolution of my invaluable guide, I gave way to almost frantic expressions of woe. I was incapable of affording the least consolation to Mrs. G—, although her husband had, in his last moments, expressed pleasure in the thought, that she would have a support in my society.

Mrs. G— mourned her loss with impetuous and unabated grief for many months ;—she erected a monument to his memory in her garden ; she vowed a perpetual state of widowhood ; and frequent, sad, and sincerely mournful, were the visitations we made to his tomb.

Mrs. G— was still in this frame of mind, when she received a letter from her sister, the Duchess of C—, informing her, that her ladyship's second son,

Lord Henry C—, was in a few weeks to set out on his travels, and begged permission to pay his respects to his aunt before his departure.

Lord Henry was Mrs. G—'s favourite nephew;—tho' she had never seen his lordship since his childhood, I had often heard her speak of him with rapture, (as she always did of every thing she loved) and the thought of his visit afforded her infinite pleasure.

When he arrived, she seemed enchanted with the improvements he had made in the exterior graces. His form was infinitely elegant; and his countenance had an openness that presaged the integrity and grandeur of his spirit; whilst the temperate fire, that beamed from his eyes, spoke the strength and clearness of his judgment.

“I am charmed, my dear Miss,
Hampden,

Hampden, with your beautiful and animated description," cried Maria; "but excuse my interruption—pray proceed."

"The likeness is not at all flattered, if you will believe me, Miss Mor-daunt," returned Miss Hampden, blushing.

"I dare say not, my dear," said Maria;—"be kind enough to proceed; for I am vastly interested for your amiable hero."

Mrs. G— (continued Miss Hampden) introduced me to Lord Henry, as the favourite companion of the last ten years of her life.

Lord Henry, as he turned to make his compliments to me, gazed fixedly on my face a moment without speaking, but with a look that will never be effaced from my memory. He seemed to penetrate the inmost folds of my heart; but at the same time inspired
none

none of that embarrassment one usually experiences, when under particular observation. My soul seemed to submit itself with pleasure to his scrutiny, as if conscious the heart of its judge beat with sentiments congenial to its own, as if certain of candour and lenity. Recollecting himself, he bowed to me with the most respectful politeness; and in answer to Mrs. G—'s introductory intelligence, that "I had spent the last ten years with her," he replied, with a quickness of respiration that flattered me extremely, as it seemed to indicate that his words flowed from the heart,—“You must have been very happy, Madam!”

The tone of voice in which this interesting compliment was paid, still vibrates in my ear; the same words might have been spoken five hundred

times in any other cadence, and never have reached the heart.

• After supper, (for it was evening when he arrived) I remember the conversation turned upon the art of letter-writing; when Mrs. G—, remarking how much the female sex excelled in that part of literature, did me the honour, in the warmth and flow of her partiality, which (as I have before observed) was often unbounded in favour of those she loved, gave *me* as an instance.

“You are cruel, Madam,” said Lord Henry; “for you raise a curiosity which, it is most probable, cannot be gratified—familiar letters generally turning on subjects of a private and domestic nature.”

“I see no cause why your curiosity may not be regaled, my dear Henry,” returned Mrs. G—; “for I have now
in

in my possession fifty letters from Miss Hampden, which contain nothing that should make her object to any one's seeing them;" and thus saying, in spite of my intreaties to the contrary, she pulled two or three out of her pocket-book, and laughing at me, gave them to Lord Henry. It had been a custom with Mrs. G— and myself to write frequently to each other, though under the same roof; a practice which had been suggested by my kind preceptor, Mr. G—, as a method to lead me insensibly to write a free and unembarrassed style: our subjects were usually drawn from occurrences within the limits of our own acquaintance. The enthusiasm with which Lord Henry praised my letters, induced Mrs. G— to shew him some translations I had made from the Latin and Italian poets. The admiration he expressed

expressed of these juvenile attempts, was a strong argument of that partiality he afterwards professed for me; since the strength of his unbiassed judgment was unquestionable.

Every day gave us new cause to admire the sweet urbanity of Lord Henry's disposition, the extent of his knowledge, and the variety of his accomplishments. Mrs. G— contemplated, with the highest fraternal rapture, the lustre of his talents, which promised, when matured by time, and brought into their proper sphere of action, to become the ornament and glory of his illustrious family. Alas! for my own part, the share I took in her happiness on this occasion, (for to this cause I then attributed the pleasure I experienced from hearing the praises of Lord Henry) was the grand source of all my future misery.

CHAP.

C H A P. XVIII.

ONE morning, I happened to be reading to Mrs. G— and Lord Henry, from a volume of the writings of the admirable Fielding; and after reciting a passage that charmed me particularly, I exclaimed involuntarily, with a force of expression that was natural to the ardency of my feelings,—“ If ever painting should give *my* form, *my* features to posterity, let me be seen—my hair unbound, and my brows wreathed with cypress—in the attitude of a mourner at thy tomb, oh thou bright spirit of heart-cheering humour, endearing sympathy, poignant wit, and daring observation !”

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Mrs.

Mrs. G— laughed at this poetical rant, as she called it; and turning to Lord Henry, who sometimes amused himself with drawing,—“There is a subject for your pencil, my Lord,” said she. Lord Henry urged that he was unequal to the task, and would have declined it; but Mrs. G— insisted that he should make an attempt.

His Lordship succeeded extremely well in drawing a likeness of my person, which seemed to give him great satisfaction; the design itself was simple, elegant, and pathetic.

Mrs. G— liked it extremely, and requested she might have it; but Lord Henry evaded giving it to her that morning, by saying he would take an opportunity of endeavouring to make it more worthy her acceptance.

About two days after, as I was crossing the vestibule to go into the garden,
I picked

I picked up a small roll of paper, which on opening I found to contain the drawing I have been speaking of, much improved, and another exactly copied from it. Whilst I stood with the paper in my hand, Lord Henry came out of the garden, and approached me.

"You have just found what I came back to look for, Miss Hampden," said he, hesitatingly, and somewhat confused; "I was going to amuse myself with my pencil in the Gothic temple, and lost it by the way."

"This accident, my Lord," said I, in a raillying tone, "has discovered to me that you are not absolutely blind to your own perfections.—You told Mrs. G— you thought the piece unworthy her preserving; and yet I find your Lordship has taken the trouble of *copying* it."

“ You railly me too severely, Miss Hampden, replied Lord Henry ; could you ascribe my copying the drawing to no cause but vanity ?—however, your not conceiving the motive is a new proof, charming Emilia, that you at least are totally blind to your own perfections.”

This speech I might easily have mistaken for that tribute of flattery usually paid to female youth, when accompanied with any share of personal attractions, had not the expressive look which attended it plainly evinced, that Lord Henry wished me to think it meant a great deal more than a customary compliment. I confess I felt myself greatly embarrassed ; I would have given the world for one sprightly idea, with which to have changed the conversation ; my cheeks glowed with a confusion I could not suppress ;—I

stood a moment or two without articulating a syllable, when Mrs. G—'s woman passing us to go into the garden, I instantaneously recollected myself, returned the papers into Lord Henry's hand, and, turning round, opened the door of the parlour in which Mrs. G— was sitting, and entered it, leaving Lord Henry to pursue his intended walk.

Whilst I sat at my toilet that morning, dressing for a visit we were to make after dinner, I received a letter directed by Lord Henry. I had frequently received letters in the hand-writing of his Lordship, Mrs. G— having constituted him her secretary in our correspondence; but then they had always been delivered to me, either by Mrs. G— herself, or by Lord Henry in her presence. The peculiar introduction, therefore, of this, joined to the

K 3

recollection

recollection of his behaviour this morning, and on some other occasions, brought the colour into my cheeks scarlet deep. I durst not open the letter immediately, lest Mrs. G—'s woman, who stood beside me placing some ornaments in my hair, should peruse the contents; and I feared to bid her retire, lest the command should create suspicion. Assuming, therefore, all the ease I could summon, I threw the letter carelessly on the toilet, where I let it remain till she had finished my head-dress and left me, when, almost breathless with agitation, I broke the seal. It was a declaration of his sentiments, written with the romantically tender enthusiasm of youthful love and honour.

He intreated me to inform him if my heart was totally disengaged, protesting, that should my affections be free, and
I thought

I thought him worthy of my favour, he should be the happiest being upon earth: adding, that when he returned from his travels he should then be of age, and in possession of an estate left him by his grandfather, Sir William W——; and if I would condescend to share the moderate fortunes of a younger brother, nothing should impede an indissoluble union.

The nobleness, the generosity of his sentiments, penetrated my very soul: my regard rose almost to adoration; and it was some time before I had any other sensations than those of joy at being beloved by so uncommon and exalted a being. But these thoughts were soon dissipated.—A reflection on the disparity of our birth and fortune shot rapidly through my heart, and, in a kind of phrenzy, the words—"Who am I?—How dare I presume?" burst

from my impassioned heart.—“ Good God ! how ungrateful a return am I making for the long years of services rendered me by my dear Mrs. G—, by thus rejoicing at what, were she apprized of, would fill her with the utmost inquietude !”

As I spoke these words, the agony which had almost stifled me broke forth into tears, and whilst pulling out my handkerchief to wipe my eyes, I saw, from the bow window in which I sat, and which commanded the garden, Lord Henry walking on the grass terrace. This sight added to my distress ; —I retreated from the window, determined at all events to put a negative upon his Lordship’s addresses ; but then again I could not think of doing this, without at the same time expressing my admiration of his generosity, and the satisfaction I felt in his good opinion ;

opinion; and I feared my feelings might lead me to say more than would be strictly consistent with the plan I had laid down for my conduct. I resolved, therefore, to write a letter expressive of my sentiments, and give it to Lord Henry at a convenient opportunity.—I took up a pen and attempted to write, but could not please myself; I thought my language wanted force;—I wrote again;—but the expressions I had used in making the denial rent my heart as I re-perused them; but the more reluctant my heart was, the more I determined it should go. The letter, however, was so blotted with my tears, that to have given it to him in the state it then was, would have been putting into his hands a monument of my weakness. I took a fresh sheet of paper, stifled my tears, and, summoning up all the resolution I could com-

mand, began to transcribe it. I had scarcely finished a line before I received a summons to dinner; and, having locked my papers in my cabinet, I descended, trembling lest Lord Henry should gain an opportunity of speaking to me before I had prepared the letter for him.

C H A P. XIX.

DURING dinner-time, Lord Henry viewed me several times with apprehension and concern. I thought he perceived by my looks that I had been weeping, and the idea greatly added to my embarrassment; which was still to admit of augmentation; for after dinner Mrs. G— complained violently of a head-ach, and at length said, she must beg we would make an apology to the family we were going to visit, for her absence. I was distressed beyond measure at the idea of a *tête-à-tête* with Lord Henry, and intreated she would suffer me to attend her at home.

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“By no means, by no means,” said she; “as there is to be a rural ball in the evening, I cannot think of keeping you away, Emilia; besides, what will Lord Henry say to my depriving him of a partner?”

I again supplicated her with much earnestness to permit me to stay with her, saying, I was certain there would be ladies disengaged, infinitely more worthy the honour of his Lordship’s hand than myself. These words were pronounced with a singularity of emphasis which only Lord Henry comprehended. He returned me no other answer than a deep sigh, and a look that so tenderly reproached me for my eagerness to deprive him of an opportunity of conversing with me, that it drew the starting tears into my eyes, and I was obliged to have recourse to a
feigned

feigned fit of coughing to hide my agitation.

Lord Henry now proposed, that, as neither his aunt nor myself chose to go, a servant should be sent to excuse the appearance of all three, averring that he should take no pleasure in paying the visit under such circumstances; to this proposal Mrs. G— would give no ear, but absolutely laid her injunctions upon me to go. Lord Henry pressed my hand as he put me into the coach, and when he had seated himself beside me, and it had rolled off, I saw him anxiously endeavouring to catch my eye, which I strove to prevent by taking out my knotting bag, and busily employing myself; and whilst so doing, anxiously deliberated on what I should say. At length Lord Henry broke silence by exclaiming,

“ Have I totally offended you, Miss
Hampden,

Hampden, by the liberty I took this morning?"

I was unable to make a reply; the shuttle with which I was knotting dropped from my hand; Lord Henry stooped down on one knee to pick it up, and in that attitude, as he gave it into my trembling hand, reiterated the question.

"Offended me!" I at last returned, "Oh no, my Lord! believe me, so noble a proof of your partiality has a quite contrary effect upon my mind; it gives me both pride and pleasure. Your liberal offers and generous forgetfulness of the inequality of our conditions, are new proofs of the superiority of your Lordship's sentiments over much the larger part of mankind, and equally deserve my gratitude and my admiration."

[At that instant so animated a joy took

took possession of his countenance, that (I confess to you my weakness) it was not without difficulty I summoned up resolution enough to proceed.]

“But the same forgetfulness, my Lord,” continued I, “which is noble in you, would be a weakness in me; and I should be unworthy the partiality you honour me with, were I capable of wounding the heart of my benefactress, by encouraging an attachment which would disunite the affections, and disappoint the hopes of that part of her family, for whose interest and happiness she is most nearly concerned.”

Lord Henry strove with all the eloquence he was master of to combat my resolve, but I steadily maintained it. He bid me consider my own merits, and think how soon those would, when
known,

known, insure me the love and respect of his family."

"I thank you, my Lord, I sincerely thank you," said I, "for the honour of your esteem; but I must intreat you will not distress me, by renewing a subject to which I am determined not to listen."

"Oh do not impose so severe an injunction upon me, lovely Emilia!" cried Lord Henry; "answer me one question, at least: Does not a prior attachment influence the steadiness of this command? if so, I will be dumb for ever on the subject, nor give you another moment's uneasiness with the recital of my hopeless sorrows."

This question, and the air with which he spoke, touched me to the heart; I knew not how to reply; but luckily at that moment we drove into the courtyard

yard of the gentleman's house whom we were going to visit.

As he led me into the house, Lord Henry again conjured me to ease his suspense. I was in the utmost perplexity how to answer, in such a manner as should prevent his further importunities. At length, I replied, "My heart as yet hath made *no choice*, my Lord."

A ray of satisfaction dawned in his eyes for a moment, but quickly disappeared; for though this confession eased him of the fears of a rival, yet the manner in which I had pronounced the words, *no choice*, precluded his hoping I entertained a prepossession in his favour. The dejection which appeared in the aspect and manner of Lord Henry, spread a gloominess over my soul, which, though I combated hard, I could not overcome. Dispirited

as

as I was, I fatigued myself with dancing almost the whole evening, to prevent him from obtaining opportunities of conversing with me. When we went home, I begged a young lady, who lived near Mrs. G—, to let us convey her home in the coach, and she accepted the offer.

We found Mrs. G— much recovered from her indisposition. An open letter lay on the table, and likewise a sealed one directed for Lord Henry, which she gave him, telling him she guessed at the contents, and was very sorry to put it into his hands.

It was from the Duke of C——, desiring his son to return home with all convenient speed, his uncle, General L—— (who was lately returned from America and earnestly wished to see his Lordship) being then on a visit at C—— manor.

manor. Lord Henry seemed a good deal agitated whilst he read the letter ; but could not form any excuse to disobey the mandate, especially as he had already spent a fortnight longer with Mrs. G— than the time at first proposed. When he had read the letter, “ I must then take leave of you to-night, my dear ladies,” said his Lordship, “ for it will be proper for me to set out to-morrow morning between six and seven o’clock.”

“ No, my dear Henry,” said Mrs. G—, “ that must not be ; I shall rise to breakfast with you.”

Lord Henry begged he might not disturb her before her usual time ; but she would take no leave of him that night, but advised him to go immediately to rest, that he might get as much refreshment as possible, to enable him
to

to endure the fatigues of the ensuing day.

We were in the breakfast room at the hour appointed; Lord Henry looked pale and agitated, and his heart seemed so full that it was with difficulty he forced himself to take any thing.

Mrs. G— went to the door for two or three minutes to give some private orders to a servant; and at that moment Lord Henry took from his bosom a letter, which he would have put into my hand, but I refused to take it. Notwithstanding this, he still held the letter, as if he hoped I should be intimidated to receive it, by the fear that Mrs. G— should turn suddenly round and find him in the attitude of offering it to me; but I was resolute, and, with an angry wafture of my hand, turned from him.

He

He now seemed doubly distressed at having offended me, and, bending on one knee, supplicated, by an affecting look, my forgiveness. This attitude alarmed me; I glanced my eye to the door, and by the action of my hands, and the perturbed expression of my countenance, besought him to rise, and spare me the painful sensations this “dumb-discoursive *” eloquence occasioned. He rose, and turning from me, leant his head against the chimney-piece, in a posture so dejected that it pierced me to the soul. Mrs. G— now returned to her seat, and in a few minutes after Lord Henry’s valet came to inform him that the horses were at the door.

“Now then,” said he, “my most dear Ladies, I must bid you a sincerely regretful farewell.”

* Shakespeare.

Mrs.

Mrs. G— tenderly embraced her nephew; Lord Henry affectionately and respectfully thanked her for all her kindnesses; and, turning to me, kissed my hands, with a look in which tenderness and reproach were so strongly mingled, that it affected me beyond measure; he sighed deeply, bowed again to each of us, and, hurrying away, hastened out of the house.

The emotious of her own mind, had prevented Mrs. G— from observing the behaviour of Lord Henry and myself; and the moment he was gone I complained of a head-ach, which she imputing to my rising somewhat earlier than common, gave me a pretence for retiring to my own apartment. I attempted not at first to stem the torrent of my grief, but gave full scope to its effusions.

CHAP.

C H A P. XX.

A Fortnight had now elapsed; during which time I had eagerly partook of every amusement that presented itself, both at home and abroad; and when amusement was not to be attained, I applied myself with redoubled assiduities to my studies; resolved, if I could not totally obliterate the partiality I felt for Lord Henry, at least not to indulge it.

One morning, as Mrs. G— and myself were crossing a field near the house, unattended, a man, who had followed us at a little distance all the way, took an opportunity, when she had advanced a few paces before me,
to

to attempt to put a letter into my hand. I concluded it was from Lord Henry, and, frowning upon the messenger, put back the hand which offered it, with an air of haughtiness that I hoped would sufficiently intimidate him, without alarming Mrs. G—. As I would not take the letter, he dropped it on the ground, and, turning about, walked back as fast as he was able. I was in the utmost consternation; when Mrs. G—, accidentally turning round, saw the letter.

“What is this, Emilia?” said she.

“I know not, Madam,” returned I, blushing;—“the man who is now crossing the field, dropped it at my feet.”

“It is a very strange affair, indeed,” said she, calling aloud to the man to return;—but he, without heeding her invocation,

invocation, continued his course, and in a few minutes got out of sight.

"A strange affair, indeed!" cried Mrs. G—, opening the letter, whilst I stood trembling beside her, anxiously waiting the consequence of this discovery.—Having glanced her eyes over it, she tore the letter in ten thousand pieces, exclaiming, with an enraged tone of voice—

"Heavens! could I ever have thought the soul of Emilia Hampden could have stooped to such a meanness! Could I ever have supposed that she, whom I had nourished next my heart for such a series of years, would have encouraged a clandestine correspondence, which she must know would inevitably kindle a perpetual flame of discord in my family!"

"What have you seen in me, Madam," replied I, "that you should con-

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denn me unheard?—Emilia Hampden has descended to no such baseness.—Believe me, when I aver, that I have entered into no clandestine correspondence, nor given ear to any overtures which might tend to disunite your family;—and if, Madam, you had only given the letter a patient reading, I am convinced that alone would have exculpated me.”—I was proceeding, but she interrupted me, exclaiming—

“Oh, Emilia! Emilia! do not attempt to impose upon me:—it is too plain you have encouraged the imprudent and inconsiderate passion of this rash youth. Nor is this the first letter you have received from Lord Henry. My woman, who suspected something of this nature, saw you receive a letter from Lord Henry whilst she dressed you. I have been slow to give ear to suggestions of this nature;
I had

I had too firm a reliance on your prudence, your sincerity, and the superiority of your mind and understanding. I disdained to tax you with the charge, unless I had, from my own observation, had cause to suspect;—but I can now no longer be blind to the duplicity of your conduct:—to have concealed from me the addresses of Lord Henry, is a proof that you did not mean wholly to discourage them.”

I made no attempt to interrupt Mrs. G— in the utterance of these undeserved reproaches:—my heart swelled almost to bursting, with sorrow, resentment, and disdain, at the unjust treatment I received for the painful struggles I had endured, in supporting the part my own notions of honour taught me to think right.—Tears of anguish rolled down my cheeks, and every feature spoke the torture of my

soul. Perhaps Mrs. G— mistook these emotions for the symptoms of guilt ; for she turned from me, as she concluded, with a look of disgust and displeasure, which tore my heart in ten thousand pieces.—At last the resentment I felt broke forth into words—

“ My silence on the subject of Lord Henry’s addresses, Madam, proceeded from nothing but the most upright motive in the world—the dislike of giving you pain ; and, as I have acted according to the strictest dictates of justice and honour, I shall ever look upon my silence as one of my greatest merits.—My own word attests my innocence ; and if the word of Emilia Hampden hath lost its currency in the mind of her benefactress, she voluntarily relinquishes all pretensions to her future favours ; and will seek an asylum with a parent, who, as she hath
done

done nothing to disgrace herself or him, cannot withhold his protection.

Mrs. G— made some reply that indicated continued suspicion, and wound my soul up to a pitch of resentment, that would not permit me to remonstrate. She seemed inflexibly determined to arm herself against conviction, and we returned home in a state of gloomy silence. Finding it impossible to remove this unhappy prepossession in my disfavour, I told Mrs. G— that I would write immediately to my father, informing him of the particulars, and my wishes to put myself under his protection: she made no objection to this proposal, and I executed it.

Unable to support the coldness of Mrs. G—'s deportment towards me, I confined myself almost wholly to my own apartment, under pretence of indisposition.

disposition. The ease and insensibility with which she saw me prepare for my departure, at first astonished me;—I could not conceive how a woman, who had for so many years cherished me as her own child, could so suddenly cast off all affection, and so obstinately persist in persuading herself I was guilty. My sequestration from company afforded me time to revolve past circumstances in my mind.

It occurred to my remembrance, that Col. Herbert, who had spent the summer with his brother Sir James Herbert, (our neighbour) had been of late very frequent in his visits at our house;—his repeated assiduities to Mrs. G— had not escaped my observation. I recollected that Mrs. G— had once asked my opinion of that gentleman. I told her, with sincerity, I thought his person, understanding, and deportment

ment were elegant,—but that I disliked his character; for, if report spoke true, Col. Herbert had nearly dissipated his patrimonial fortune, and was besides luxurious, unprincipled, and addicted to gaming. I delivered my sentiments the more strongly, because, at that time, he took frequent opportunities of professing a passion for me; probably imagining, (as most of her acquaintance in Wales did) that Mrs. G— would give me a considerable portion, if I married to her approbation; and therefore I suspected he had interceded with Mrs. G— to become his advocate with me; and that she took this method of making herself mistress of my opinion. Again, I called to mind, that after this conversation she seemed involved in thought, fretful, and unhappy, for some hours. In the afternoon of that day she excused

herself from paying a visit with me, alledging some trifling indisposition as an excuse; and when I returned in the evening, Col. Herbert was with her;—but this, at the time, I thought might be merely accidental; not suspecting that, finding me inexorable, *he had transferred his addressee to my patroness.*

From a variety of circumstances, too tedious to enumerate, it appeared plainly that Mrs. G— had not discouraged his addressee; and her wishing to conceal this fact from me, led me to draw the following inference, namely,—That she suffered herself to see my conduct respecting Lord Henry in a wrong light, in order to afford a colour for removing from her presence, one whom she knew revered almost to idolatry the memory of Mr. G—; one whose strong regret for his loss was still living, and whom she perhaps imagined

gined would look, with some degree of contempt upon her, for suffering her heart to open to a new attachment, almost before the sod which covered the grave of her departed husband had regained its verdure; whilst the tears she had so recently shed on his urn, yet remained as evidences of her broken faith.

I received, in a few days, a short letter from my father, signifying that he was sorry to hear a disagreement had arisen betwixt myself and Mrs. G—; but informing me that he should receive me with pleasure and affection.

I set out a few days afterwards.—The indifference with which my late indulgent friend took leave of me, wrung me to the heart; had she spoken but one tender word, I should have fallen at her feet in an agony of tender sorrow; but her coldness kept me from

sinking under my feelings, and enabled me to depart with some degree of composure.—Composure! did I say? Oh, no!—that is a defective term.—But you, my dear Miss Mordaunt, have a heart that can conceive what I felt.

Before I left the house, Mrs. G— put into my hands a purse, which she told me would defray the expences of my journey. At that moment, such was the wounded pride of my spirit, that I would have given worlds, had I possessed them, to have refused this present from the hand of one, whose heart seemed to have shut itself against me. But I had no way of avoiding it; for my father had sent me no money, and I had nearly expended the sum I received quarterly from Mrs. G—. I accepted it, therefore, with the best grace my struggling soul would permit.

mit me; and, thanking her for all her favours, I flew out of the room, and into the chaise, with the utmost precipitation.

Unknowing of the world, I thought the misery I then experienced could never be exceeded. But alas! sad as my first affliction was, what was it in comparison of those ills it has since drawn upon me!

C H A P. XXI.

WHEN we arrived in London, I gave orders to be driven to the place my father's letter specified; and judge my sensations, when the driver stopped at a small shabby-looking house, in a narrow street in Oxford Road. From the meanness of the exterior appearance of the house, so different from what I had been taught to expect, I could not persuade myself the man was right. I took the direction from my pocket, hoping to find I had told him a wrong number—but in this I was disappointed; I then flattered myself he had mistaken the street; and

and interrogated him upon that head, before I would suffer him to knock.

“Oh yes, Madam,” said he, “I am quite right; and if you had happened to have looked up as you turned the corner house, you would have seen the name of the street wrote up.”

Saying which, he gave a thundering rap at the door, which was immediately opened by a dirty-looking servant girl. I enquired if Mr. Hampden lived there? She answered in the affirmative, desiring me to walk up stairs, and she believed I should find somebody belonging to him above. I requested her to see my things taken from the chaise; and, much fatigued in body and depressed in spirits, ascended a narrow strait stair-case, and, at the door of a front room, was received by an old woman, whose appearance was a degree meaner than that of a common servant.

vant. On my asking her if Mr. Hampden was at home, she answered in the negative; but told me she waited upon him, and, with much respect, begged me to walk in, and take some refreshment after my long journey. I entered; but how was I shocked with the appearance of every thing that surrounded me! My wearied spirits now sunk to the lowest pitch; dejected and forlorn, I sat down in one corner of this gloomy apartment—my mind filled with grief and perplexity.—I could by no means account for what I saw. My father's situation in life had been represented to me as creditable, and even genteel; I had never been told that his circumstances were reduced, and was in the utmost perplexity how to reconcile the air of abject meanness, that pervaded every thing

thing I saw, to the description I had received from Mrs. G—. I could not believe she had imposed upon me, for so long a term of years. I rather imagined, some sad reverse of fortune had occasioned the present appearance of things—but then I was at as great a loss, to what cause to impute his concealing from me a calamity, which must only strike me more forcibly when I met it unprepared. At last an idea took possession of my mind, that avarice must have occasioned this appearance of poverty.

This idea made several things, which had before almost iced my blood, now serve rather by their novelty to amuse me; whilst I flattered myself, that if my father had an affection for me, I might prevail upon him to enlarge this contracted plan of life. I had before refused all the old woman's intreaties

intreaties to take some refreshment; but now of my own accord requested her to give me some tea, which she immediately began to prepare by lighting a fire, and putting on the tea-kettle; and as it was a cool evening, at the latter end of the summer, the warmth the fuel diffused was not ungrateful to me: whilst the old woman was busied in making the fire burn, I employed myself in putting the tea equipage in order.

C H A P. XXII.

I HAD taken some tea, and was grown rather more chearful, when my father came in ;—but how was I shocked at his appearance ! He wore the slovenly dress of indolent poverty, not the formal penurious garb of thrifty avarice. He gave an involuntary start of surprize when he first saw me, but recovered himself as he approached to embrace me. My observation and my feelings were naturally rapid ; I saw instantaneously, though I knew not for what reason, that I was an unexpected—and, I feared, an unwished-for guest. The discovery pierced my heart ; I could make no reply to the questions
my

my father asked me concerning Mrs. G—; the agony I endured swelled my throat almost to suffocation; at length a shower of tears forced a passage to my eyes, and I sunk upon a chair, overwhelmed with grief. My father seemed a good deal affected; he bade the old woman go into the next room, when, taking my hand,—“Come, child,” said he, “things may change for the better: it is true my situation is far different from what you or Mrs. G— expected; but I have hopes of again obtaining as good a place as that I have lost.”

“Oh, Sir!” said I, weeping, “had you informed me of this unfortunate change before, it would not thus have overwhelmed me; I should have been prepared, in some degree, to have borne it with patience.”

“That is true, child,” said he; “but
I con-

I concealed it from prudential motives. I thought that if I wrote word to Mrs. G—, that I had lost the place I held when she first knew me, it might lessen you in her estimation, (the knowledge of one's poverty having sometimes that effect) and induce her to return you upon my hands. I had some thoughts of telling you of it when I answered your last letter; but the same reason still prevented me—as I hoped a reconciliation would take place; for I could not have thought, that she, who was always so fond of you, could have suffered you to leave her.” He added, that it appeared very strange to him; and that he thought, if I had behaved right, somebody must have prejudiced her against me, to occasion her so suddenly giving way to suspicion.

The coldness of this speech, particularly the expression, “*returning you*
upon”

upon my hands," pained me to the heart. I entered into those particulars, however, that might tend to vindicate my conduct in the eye of my parent; and, in some degree to account for the impetuous behaviour of Mrs. G—, I told him what I have before related to you concerning Col. Herbert; upon hearing which, my father seemed no longer surprized,—saying, “when a woman of her years has got a new husband in her head, there was nothing to be wondered at that she did.”

I was, as you will suppose, anxious to know by what means my father had lost the place (I understood) he had held under government. The fact was, he had only *shared* the income accruing from a considerable place, for going through the business of it for the real proprietor; but about five years before my arrival in town, having given umbrage

brage to the place-holder, by too freely avowing himself of different political sentiments, he was dismissed. Since which he had followed the profession to which he had been bred, namely, the Law; but his disposition leading him more towards the study of politics than business, he of course profited little by it.

But to return:—The second day after I arrived in London, as we sat at breakfast, my father asked me, if I had got any money:—adding, that he was in great want of some for present supply. I immediately produced a bank bill of fifty pounds, which I had found in the purse Mrs. G— had given me when I left her house, telling him, at the same time, how very mortifying a circumstance it had been to me to accept it, whilst labouring under the displeasure of the donor.

donor. But he seemed to have lost all conception of feelings of that kind ; indeed I am not sure he heard half I said : he was more agreeably employed in looking at the note, a gleam of satisfaction spreading itself over his countenance, the first I had seen illumine it since my arrival.

As soon as he had finished his breakfast, he hurried out to get the bill exchanged ; and I saw him no more till near six o'clock in the evening, when he came home in tolerable spirits, desiring me to go with him to the play, as a new comedy was to be represented that night for the first time.

I objected, on account of not having time to change my dress ; but he answered, that I might, with a very little alteration, make myself fit to go in a hat into the green boxes, where he had ordered places to be kept for us. In short,

after some little persuasion, I accompanied him to the theatre. The representation was begun when we entered; and as the box-keeper conducted us to our places, my father asked him,—how the audience seemed to approve the piece?

“The performers are now in the third scene, Sir,” replied the box-keeper, “and so far it hath gone off extremely well; I fancy it will prove a good piece; for I spoke with one of the *editors* a minute ago, and he told me that, from what he had seen of it, he judged it would *do*.”

The man spoke with so much gravity of the person he stiled an *editor*, that when we had seated ourselves I said to my father—

“Pray, Sir, what did the man mean by an editor?—What is an editor?”

“He

“He means the editors of the newspapers, child, who write criticisms on the merits and demerits of the theatrical performers, and on all the new pieces they exhibit. I know one of these gentlemen extremely well.”

“A *good* dramatic critic,” said I, “must be a man of very rare and exalted talents. I should suppose him possessed of a mind enriched with the boundless stores of Greece and Rome, and adorned with all that is elegant and praise-worthy in modern arts and literature; a soul feelingly alive to every thing sublime, impassioned, noble, and endearing; an imagination bold, brilliant, and vivacious, yet chastened by judgment, and refined by a correct and delicate taste. These dramatic critics, I suppose, Sir, are chosen and appointed by the Lord Chamberlain?”

“Oh

“ Oh no, child ; they are deputed by nobody but the proprietors of the news-papers.”

Here my father, whom I had observed to smile several times during the delivery of my speech, burst into a violent fit of laughter. I then thought his behaviour strange, as I was not conscious of having said any thing absurd ; —but I was prevented from asking an explanation at that time, by a sight that absorbed all my faculties. The door of the opposite stage box opened, and I saw enter Lord Henry, the Duchess of C——, (his Lordship’s mother) and a young and elegant female companion. Lord Henry seated himself betwixt the two ladies ; the younger practising a thousand little graces and affectations to gain his attention, whilst I perceived (or fancied I did) Lord Hen-

ry listen to and behold her with peculiar pleasure—nay, I once thought I saw him press her hand. Alas! till that moment I knew not how very dear he was to my heart, or how blended his idea with every fibre of my existence—for till then I had never felt the tumultuous pang of jealous apprehension. I shaded my face behind my fan, but lost not for one minute the interesting sight of their countenances;—whilst I gazed upon them, my heart throbbed as if it would have left my breast; ten thousand torturing ideas crowded to my brain, and agonizing sickness oppressed my soul; I begged my father to take me away, complaining of a sudden illness;—when we got out, the air somewhat revived my strength, but my heart was still rived with all the inquietudes of an ill-fated, hopeless passion. A coach was
9 called,

called, and my father having set me down at our own house, advised me to order the old woman to prepare something for me, and to go immediately to rest. I could make no answer but by an assenting bend of my head, as the coach drove from the door, in order to carry him back to the theatre.

C H A P. XXIII.

MY brain was in a state little short of actual phrensy!—The instant I got up stairs, I gave full scope to my despair; I threw myself on the ground; I tore my hair, regardless of all the old woman's endeavours to pacify me; till at length, concluding me mad, she was going to call up some of the family. This brought me to myself, and I called her back, telling her I should be more composed in a little time, and desiring her by no means to mention to my father the situation she had seen me in; and the better to secure her fidelity I gave her money.

money. She appeared rejoiced to see my reason returned, and gladly assisted me in undressing. I passed the night in sighs, tears, and agonies ; every prospect of happiness, or even of comfort, seemed flown ! eternally flown ! The morning dawned upon my sleepless eyes ;—I rose ; but to new sorrows.—Cut off from all society ! at least all that could make life desirable ; without a guide to direct, without a friend to soothe me ! my breast torn by a hopeless passion ! think what I endured !—My father was gone out before I rose ;—the old woman had prepared my breakfast, which she pressed me earnestly to take.—A fiery vapour clouded my brain ; my temples beat as if they would have cleft ;—I could not eat.—My mouth was parched and my throat dry ; in order to allay this violent

M 3 thirst,

thirst, I drank two or three dishes of tea, after which I seated myself beside the window in a sort of stupid lethargy of grief.

It was not long before I was roused from this inactive state, by seeing the man who had given me the letter from Lord Henry, in the field, go into a shop on the opposite side of the way. I started from the window, ran across the room to the old woman, and seizing her by the arm—for my misery had made me perfectly wild—

“Go,” said I, “and enquire of that man you see in the opposite shop, who the young lady was that accompanied the Duchess of C—— and her son Lord Henry, to the play last night; and ask him if he knows the cause of Lord Henry’s being still in England. But I charge you on your life, let no persuasions

persuasions tempt you to reveal to whom you belong."

The old woman flew, or rather hobbled, as swift as she could to obey my directions ;—and, not till she had crossed the way, and I saw her in close conference with the man, did I reflect on the impropriety, madness, and folly of this action.—I was terrified to death lest she should be prevailed upon to reveal her employer. At last she returned ; I eagerly enquired if she had discovered to the man from whom she came ; she protested she had not, and that so earnestly that I had no farther doubts.

She learnt from the man, that the young lady whom I had seen at the play with Lord Henry, was his Lordship's cousin, Lady Charlotte D—— ; and that a feverish complaint which had hung upon Lord Henry for some

M 4

weeks,

weeks, had been the occasion of retarding his journey.

This information eased my heart of half its load;—for some minutes I forgot all my sorrows in the happy thought, that what I had mistaken for the attention of a lover had been nothing more than the affectionate regards of a relation.

I felt the tenderest pity for his indisposition, mixed with a sensation so like pleasure, that I know not what other name to give it. In short (I confess to you my weakness) I flattered myself that his anxiety on my account had been the cause of it. It is impossible to describe to you, my dear Miss Mordaunt, the change this unexpected incident (though it brought with it nothing that could inspire hope) wrought in my mind for some hours. I attempted to amuse myself with my books, for the
first

first time since I had been in town; and when my father came home to dinner, I happened to be reading an affecting passage in the *Pharsalia* of Lucan. On his entrance I laid down the book, and wiped my eyes, which were wet with tears.

My father asked me what play or novel I had been reading, and took up the volume; on opening it he gave a start, exclaiming, "Do you read Latin, child?"

I answered in the affirmative; upon which he desired I would let him hear me construe a passage into English. This I did, and afterwards shewed him the translations I had attempted from Horace, and from the Italian of Metastasio.

He seemed very much surprised; and said he should bring his friend Mr. ———, the editor (who would great-

ly admire my talents) to see me some day or other; telling me, that if I was inclined to write for the press, he would be the proper person to serve me with the booksellers. I answered him, that I had no such idea; but he replied, that he thought I could not do better than to employ myself in that way, as the delicacy of my education had unfitted me for any other method of getting my bread.

I said I was willing to undertake any thing for which I was qualified; and here the conversation ended for that time.

The old woman seemed pleased to see my reason returned; and after we had dined, and her master was gone out, she strove to entertain me, by relating several stories she had acquired from those curious repositories of fugitive wit,

wit, called jest books ; a repartee of one of our celebrated wits, which I had never heard, made me laugh, however, in spite of all my melancholy ; but I begun at last to be very much tired with her tales, and voluminous comments upon them ; and was begging her to be silent, when I heard somebody come up stairs and rap at the door of our apartment. As I happened to be near it, I rose from my seat and opened the door ; but judge my surprise ! my confusion ! my overwhelming feelings ! when it admitted Lord Henry C—— ! —I had not strength to upbraid the old woman for her falsehood to my commands ;—the blood forsook my cheeks, and in attempting to totter to a chair, I sunk almost lifeless on the floor. How long I continued in this situation I know not ; but when I came to myself,

self, the first object which struck my sight was Lord Henry supporting me in his arms, on whose countenance terror and tender sorrow had left their impassioned traces.

“Thank Heaven!” exclaimed he, “she yet lives!—I have not killed the idol of my soul.”

I had not strength to articulate a syllable; but, almost insensible, I sunk again on the shoulder of Lord Henry.

“Forgive me, oh forgive me, lovely Emilia, the distress my unhappy passion hath occasioned you,” cried his Lordship, drawing me to his bosom as he wiped away the tears with which he had bedewed my cheeks, “if you knew what I have suffered (since the fatal day the Duchess received a letter from my aunt, informing her, that she had discovered a correspondence between

tween her son and a young lady who had resided some years with her, but whom she had now sent home to her friends) you would not refuse me your pity. To describe to you the distress I felt, at having, by my imprudence, drawn upon you the displeasure of my aunt, is impossible!—I assured my father and mother that Mrs. G— had totally mistaken the case; and wrote immediately to her, averring in the solemnest terms, that you had invariably discouraged my addresses, and refused to receive any letter from me since you had had cause to suspect the import. A lucky chance gave me to know, this day, where you resided in London, and I embraced, with eagerness, an opportunity of conjuring you to pardon, if it be possible, my imprudence.—Forgive my intrusion, and suffer me to
leave

leave you with the small consolation of knowing you do not hate me."

My tears flowed so fast that I was incapable of answering him for some minutes.

"Only make me one promise, my Lord," said I, disengaging myself from his holding, "and after that you may assure yourself I forgive you, with my whole soul, all the distress and embarrassment the delivery of that fatal letter brought upon me."

Lord Henry viewed me with a look, in which was blended the most ardent enquiry, and the tenderest affliction.

"Heavens!" cried he, "what is there I would not do to obtain that blessing!"

"Promise me then, my Lord," returned I, as I seated myself on a chair, assuming all the steadiness of voice and manner

manner I could command, “ promise me then, my Lord, that you will never again attempt to invade my retirement ; but leave me unmolested to pursue my obscure, my mournful destiny. I cannot, indeed I cannot support these alarms, united with so many other sorrows—they distract my very soul.”

I was fearful I had spoken too feelingly, and, a little recovering myself, I added, “ If you feel what you describe, do not force me to behold the misery I cannot relieve.”

“ Alas !” replied Lord Henry, “ I need make no *vows* to obtain your pardon, for to-morrow I bid adieu to England for three years ; I have now broke from a circle of friends and relatives who have spent part of this day with me as a farewell visit.—Will you be kind enough to answer me one question,
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my

my dear Miss Hampden," continued his Lordship, after a pause—"Do you think there was nothing particular in the motive of Colonel Herbert's visits to my aunt last summer?—I own to you, it struck me at the time, that it would not be long before she exchanged her state of freedom for the matrimonial chains."

The question Lord Henry had asked me I knew not how to evade, and therefore I answered him with my real sentiments; and, from his reply, learnt that his penetration had imputed Mrs. G—'s ready assent to my departure to the same motive I had suspected.

"Oh heavens," continued he, "how could my aunt have the extreme cruelty, the extreme injustice, to let any motive prevail upon her to reduce you to a situation so unworthy of your native talents,

talents, your inborn elegance, and acquired accomplishments !—but why do I arraign her conduct ? I am ten thousand times more to blame ; for my folly, my imprudence, gave her the opportunity.”

“ Call not Mrs. G—’s conduct unjust, my Lord,” said I ; “ she had a right to do with me as she thought proper. I was wrong in not informing her at first, that you had unhappily misplaced your affections on one beneath you ; but, Heaven is my witness, I concealed it from the purest motive of friendship, the fear of giving her pain, and because I thought I had sufficiently discouraged you from repeating your addresses. To have lost the friendship, the regard, of Mrs. G—, wounds me to the soul ; but there is no act of injustice in her reducing me to my original nothingness.”

“ Oh

“Oh speak not so unworthily of yourself, my great, my lovely Emilia!” cried Lord Henry.

As he spoke, we heard the sound of feet on the stair-case.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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